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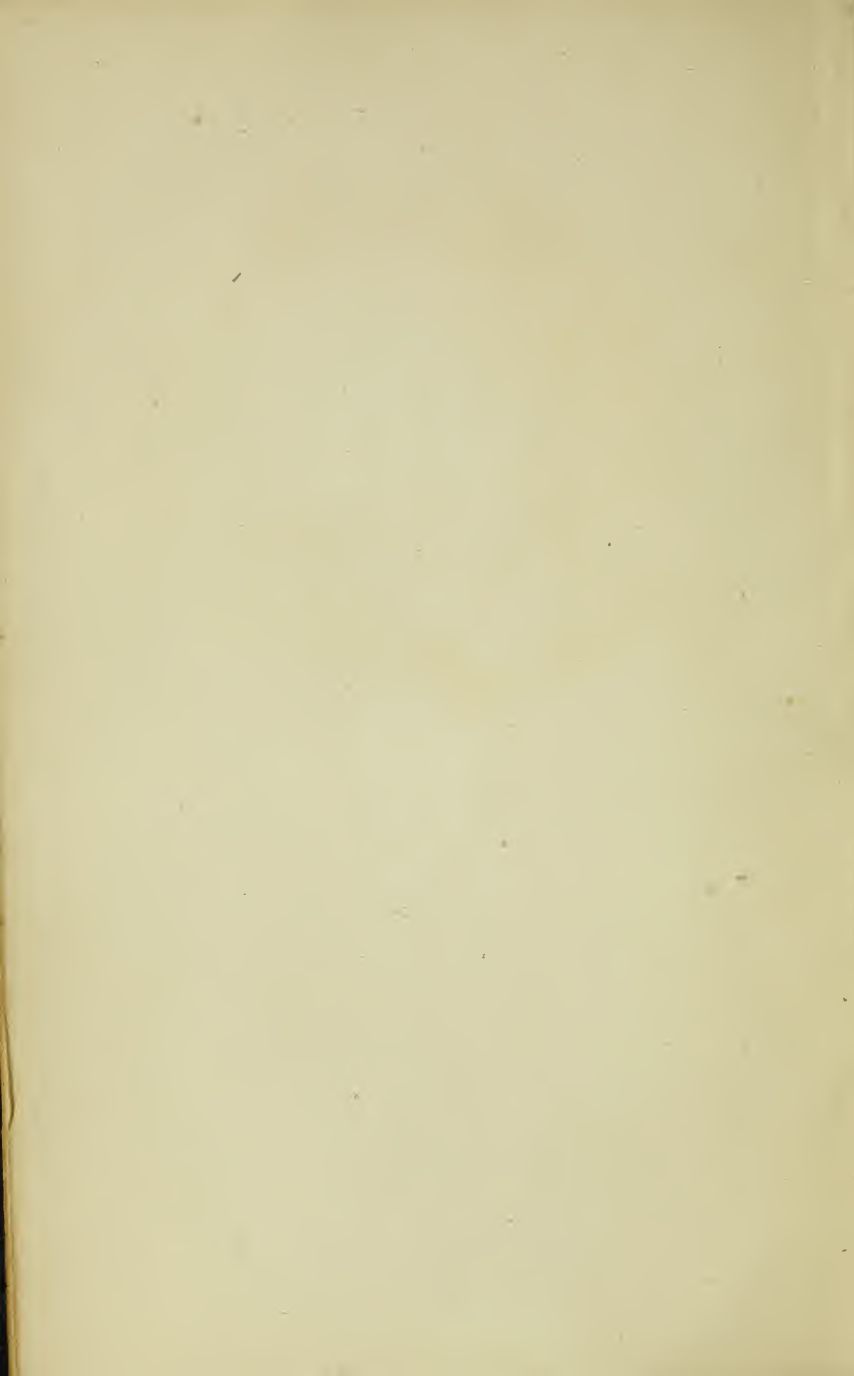




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WILLIAM WALLACE FOTHERGILL.

ÆT 49.

From an Original by Sir J. Lawrence, in the possession of Sir R. B. Dight's Bar.

Published by Henry Colman.



THE  
CORRESPONDENCE  
OF  
WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

EDITED BY HIS SONS,  
ROBERT ISAAC WILBERFORCE, M. A.  
VICAR OF EAST FARLEIGH, LATE FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE;

AND  
SAMUEL WILBERFORCE, M. A.  
ARCHDEACON OF SURREY, RECTOR OF BRIGHSTONE.

REVISED AND ENLARGED FROM THE LONDON EDITION.

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As he had a great number of friends of the best men, so no man had ever the confidence to avow himself to be his enemy.—LORD CLARENDON.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

PHILADELPHIA:  
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1841.

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## PREFACE TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

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No apology can be necessary for presenting to the notice of the American public an edition of the Correspondence of Mr. Wilberforce. Living at the most eventful period of modern times, and intimately associated with all the actors in the mighty and fearful drama of which Europe was the theatre, during the latter part of the past and the beginning of the present century—participating in the counsels of the successive ministries by which the government of Great Britain was conducted during the period in which that nation exercised an unequalled control over the destinies of the civilized world—representing the interests of one-tenth of that kingdom in the House of Commons, and possessing an influence in his talents and character paramount even to that he derived from this position, an interest is attached to all his actions and thoughts, such as few other men could awaken. This interest is felt equally by the statesman, the philanthropist, and the Christian, and each will find, in these volumes, sufficient to repay him for their perusal. The correspondence of such men as Pitt, Fox, Canning, Eldon, Wellesley, and Brougham, men of enlarged minds, and occupying the highest stations in the British government, cannot be devoid of interest to any. Never descending to the petty details of private scandal, or even public gossip, there are still numerous traits of character displayed in their letters, which serve to introduce the reader to a more intimate acquaintance with them than general history affords.

But the very period which was so distinguished by perturbations among the kingdoms of the earth, was not less remarkable as the era of events which marked its character in a higher and more

important relation. Revolution and anarchy brought confusion and distress into all the relations of civil society; whilst a not less striking change was wrought in the religious relations of the British people, and from thence extended itself to all nations; not like the influence of Revolutionary France, pulling down and destroying temples and altars, and spreading the contagion of moral pestilence into the very recesses of the domestic hearth, but carrying, wherever British power was felt, the benign influence of evangelical truth. Mr. Wilberforce was not only not an inactive spectator of these events, but a faithful and energetic promoter of them, to the extent of his enlarged influence; and it is in this connection that the chief interest of these volumes consists. Co-operating in all the plans for the extension of the blessings of Protestant Christianity, he was necessarily drawn into an exchange of views and feelings with others of that noble band who formed the brightest constellation that has ever adorned the moral firmament. Where is there a Christian heart, in any quarter of the world, that does not throb with fraternal or filial emotion, at the mention of such names as Newton, Venn, Milner, Thornton, Grant, and More? No relics of their noble intellects and warm-hearted piety, can be void of interest. The expansive, ardent feeling of Newton, the simple-heartedness of Cecil, the intellect of Hannah More, and the humility of Dean Milner, are nowhere more beautifully displayed than in these volumes. Nor must our own Jay, "*clarum et venerabile nomen*," be allowed to pass uncommemorated in such an array of kindred spirits, the few letters he exchanged with Mr. Wilberforce exhibiting the strong practical common sense and decided piety of his mind.

The chief charm of the work, however, consists in the additional insight they afford to the character of Mr. Wilberforce himself. In the Memoir, we behold him as he appeared in the discharge of his high duties as a senator, a philanthropist, a parent, a friend; and this, not only through the medium of the observations and opinions of others, but through that of large extracts from his private journals. There we are permitted to behold him as he was in the solemn hour of private, heart-searching self-examination. In the Correspondence, we see him in another and not less interesting aspect, pouring out his heart in the expression of the warm feeling of friendship, the anxious admonition of parental care, the calm and guarded administration of reproof, and the rich outpourings of sym-

pathetic feeling, rejoicing with those who rejoiced, and weeping with those that wept. There is in his letters a total absence of effort and affectation. They represent simply the opinion or feeling they were intended to convey, devoid of all meretricious ornament, or redundancy of expression. The transient, yet brilliant corruscations of wit; the exquisite pathos of sentiment, and the clear and decided expression of judgment, together with the intimate knowledge of human nature and familiarity with the Word of God, which they display, stamp them with the impress of specimens of the purest style of epistolary writing.

Nor is it only in style they thus excel. The calm, tranquil character of his piety, shedding a holy yet subdued light over every thing it falls upon, glowing, yet mellowed like the radiance of the summer eve, cannot but arrest the attention of every reader.

In preparing this edition for the press, a few letters, which were possessed of but little interest on this side of the Atlantic, have been omitted; but their place has been more than supplied by others, furnished from the Memoir, as published by his sons, and other sources.





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CORRESPONDENCE

OF

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

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RT. HON. WM. PITT TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Burton Pynsent, Saturday, August 22, 1783.

Dear Wilberforce,

I hope you have found benefit enough from your inland rambling, to be in perfect order now for crossing the seas. Eliot and I meet punctually at Bankes's the 1st of September, and in two days after shall be in London. Pray let us see you, or hear from you by that time, and do not verify my prophecy of detaining us a fortnight, and jilting us at the end of it. We shall really not have a day to lose, which makes me pursue you with this hasty admonition. Adieu.

Ever yours,  
W. PITT.

RT. HON. WM. PITT TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Burton Pynsent, August 30, 1783.

Dear Wilberforce,

Your letter has relieved me from the two fears I have for some time entertained; the one of losing the pleasure of your company, the other of being made to



wait for it. I am very sorry for the state of your eyes; but I am quite of opinion that the air of Rheims is exactly the thing for you. I hope to find it equally sovereign for toothaches and swelled faces, which have persecuted me ever since I have been here, as if it was the middle of a session. We shall agree excellently as invalids, and particularly in making the robust Eliot fag for us, and ride bodkin, and letting him enjoy all the other privileges of health. He is to be at Bankes's certainly on the 2d or 3d, that is, Tuesday or Wednesday. I shall be there the 1st, and mean he should not bait more than one night if I can help it. Bankes will have some reason to quarrel with me; but I hardly see why you should come 100 miles from London merely to go back the next day. I am afraid of all unnecessary delays, as we shall certainly find no time to spare.

If you can meet with a very commodious carriage, I think you will do well to secure it; if not, we must take up with such as Monsieur Dessein will furnish us with at Calais. I direct this to the Castle of Wimbledon. If you do not come to Bankes's before we set out, leave word in Spring Gardens where you are, that we may be sure of you as soon as you arrive. I have heard some rumour of your having talked of embarking at Bright-helmston; but I assure you Dover is the place, especially as I must absolutely pass through London.

Yours most sincerely,

W. PITT.

RICHARD PEPPER ARDEN, ESQ.\* TO WILLIAM  
WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Lincoln's Inn, March 31, 1784.

Dear Wilberforce,

I received your letter, and you may be assured of every wish of my heart for your success if you stand for Yorkshire. God grant you health to go through the fatigue of being a candidate for such a county.

\* Afterwards Lord Alvanley.

I wrote the moment I received your letter, to my father, desiring him to exert what influence he has in favour of Duncombe and you. I desired him likewise either to attend at the nomination himself, or send my brother if he is at home, and I hope he will subscribe handsomely. His estate in Yorkshire is not a very large one; but I think it will be in his power to be of service to you, and I cannot entertain a doubt of his good will. I have just kissed hands as attorney-general, and chief-justice of Chester. Every thing goes on well both at Cambridge and the world in general as to elections. Pitt, thank God, keeps his health and spirits amidst a series of fatigues which would make me mad.

I am, dear Wilberforce,  
Your most sincere and affectionate friend,  
R. P. ARDEN.

RT. HON. WM. PITT TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Downing Street, December 24, 1784.

My dear Wilberforce,

I hope you will have received a letter I sent you last post, the chief business of which was to apprise you that the Reform must come on early in the session—I now think the time must be between the 20th and 25th of February. Since I wrote, I find that it is probable a meeting will be called before that time in Yorkshire, to renew a general petition, and in fact to support my proposals. It is impossible for me in writing, and especially in violent haste, to enter into all the particulars. I think a reasonable and generally satisfactory proposal may be digested; and I am working hard on all sides with a view to it. The idea with regard to Yorkshire seems to be what it ought, to procure as general a concurrence of the county as possible, and to steer clear of jealousies with regard to the Association.\* Wyvill seems to suppose the business not very difficult; though some friends are unwilling to stir. The time of the meeting

\* The Yorkshire Association.—Vide *Life of Wilberforce*, vol i.



is likely to be the end of January or beginning of February. You may just have time to write; and your suggestions to *your party* (which, I believe, is not less numerous in proportion, in Yorkshire than in the House of Commons) may be of great use. You will perhaps have heard from Wyvill about this; but I would not delay telling you all I know; as your taking some steps may be very material, and it is of great consequence that the business should come forward in a proper manner.

Adieu: I must conclude, having no time for *foining*—I hope you have in abundance, and profit by that, and by being some hundred miles from as hard a winter as the last. You have left us an unreasonable while without any news of your motions; and I rather fear Aix-en-Provence is become an obsolete direction, but it is the best we have.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. PITT.

HON. EDWARD J. ELIOT TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

1784.

My dear Wilberforce,

To begin in your own manner: "If" you think any of your friends here have not written to you because they don't love and esteem you, or because you have not been very much and very constantly in their thoughts since you went abroad, I must take upon me to say, for all and each of them, that you are most exceedingly mistaken, and doing very great injustice both to yourself and them. It would be needless to add that I am very anxiously longing for the time of your return to us, but, besides what is common to all the other *foinsters*, there is a point or two on which I want particularly to talk to you.

Pitt has written to you lately, so I will say nothing of the reform of parliament except what has happened since, which is Wyvill's letter: I don't know whether you see any papers; but he says he has authority from

Mr. Pitt to say, that he will exert all his power and weight, as a man and a minister, to carry his motion into effect. These are brave words, and I think a sort of publication of secret influence, but I believe his authority did not extend quite so far as he seems to think it did; though Pitt has certainly taken due pains about it, and, I understand, sees much more reason to expect success than he imagined after Mr. Sawbridge's motion. The Westminster scrutiny, I fear, will not end, in any way, this year, especially if the session is to be as short as we are promised, for you are to know none of the managers will hear of the parliament's sitting after the middle of May. I do not quite believe what they say of their readiness; however, they are certainly very forward in their work, and our first lord does fag them confoundedly. The resolutions for the plan of settlement of trade with Ireland are finally drawn up, and I believe many of the tax bills are ready to be presented. In the mean while, Pitt has found time to be very civil and attentive to your favourite the Countess of Salisbury (Sally Salisbury). He dined there about five or six weeks ago, and, what is almost ridiculous, went to her twelfth-night ball, very much to the edification of the butchers and bakers of Hartford and St. Albans. Steele showed him about with great propriety, and they became "sworn brothers to" several "leash of drawers."

P—— has been on a visit to E——, whom he found very happy on his 600*l.* a year, and *supposing* he should live within it. He is, you know, at a lodge of the Duke of Gloucester's in Wiltshire or Hampshire. The old boy is thought to be still obstinate.

I hope to send you soon an account of my proceedings about a reader. Best compliments to your sister.

I am, my dear W., your ever affectionate

E. J. ELIOT.

RT. HON. WM. PITT TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Brighthelmston, September 30, 1785.

My dear Wilberforce,

I can hardly imagine (though perhaps from observation and experience you may guess) how it has come to pass that, by the simple operation of putting off only from one day to the next, I have been now some months without writing to you. By the date of my letter you will perceive that idleness has had more share than business in the latter part of this delay. I have been here about three weeks in the enjoyment of exercise and leisure, and eating and drinking; things which to me, from their antiquity, were nearly forgotten, and (as you know) must for that very reason have the charm of novelty.

The only interruption which has called me to town was to dispose of my sister, whom Eliot has taken into his possession, as you have probably heard from himself, if he has yet found leisure for the use of his pen. They are, I believe, perfectly happy (though after having had some family plagues to encounter); and this, you will imagine, contributes not a little to make me so. A vacancy has occurred of remembrancer in the court of exchequer, an office for life of about 1,400*l.* per annum, which I am to be a good deal abused for having given to Eliot. I think not justly, though perhaps a little plausibly; but which I shall have abundant reason to endure with patience. It will be obsolete history to talk of the fate of the Irish propositions. It is not forced philosophy which makes me look back to it as an issue (though not the best), yet, on the whole, far from bad. To have carried the whole triumphantly would have been the first wish: to fail without endangering the quiet of the country, and even with fresh security against partial innovations in the present state of our commercial relations; and to leave the business on a clear and honourable issue, to be resumed or abandoned as the real current of opinion in that country may direct, —ought to be second. And *that* I take to be the actual

situation. It is said that there is a change of disposition already in favour of the system. But I receive these reports with caution; and though possibly it may one day be called for, I do not expect that day to be very soon. I hear of you at Spa, where (except for climate) you have, I imagine, your choice at once of all nations in a small compass; at least a collection of what your friend calls *excellent specimens*, and which must resemble a little the forest in our *jardin* of "*les peuples végétaux surpris de croître ensemble.*" I hope you profit by the waters, and that, in the mean time, it will be your principal care to select the best correspondences for the best wines from all the countries you hear of. I am going in a few days to Somersetshire to meet Eliot and my sister.

I touch at Bankes's in my way back, and shall then conclude my holidays with a fortnight more at this place. My scene of business is removed from Putney Hill to one in Kent, about fourteen miles from town, where I have just had the folly to purchase the most beautiful spot within that distance, and wanting nothing but a house fit to live in. Apropos, we are all turning country gentlemen very fast; George Rose having just bought an estate in the New Forest, which he vows is just a breakfasting distance. The produce of our revenues is glorious, and I am half mad with a project which will give our supplies the effect almost of magic in the reduction of debt. It will be at least new and eccentric enough to satisfy your constant call for *something out of the common way*. Pray let me hear from you again very soon, and particularly how you do, and when you meditate returning.

Our session will not begin till the end of January, and will end of course by the 29th of April.

Adieu, ever yours,  
W. PITT.



RT. HON. WM. PITT TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Downing Street, October 20, 1785.  
Thursday.

My dear Wilberforce,

I obey punctually the commands contained in your despatch of the 6th, which reached me only last night; and address this letter immediately to *Squire* Fectors. The tender and affecting subject which you have to negotiate, I reserve till we meet. I have only now to tell you that I am going on Saturday next, for the last time this season, to Brighthelmston, with Pratt and Apsley. Bob Smith and Steele are there likewise. I shall remain there till this day fortnight, being Thursday, 3d November, when I shall come to town for two days. On Saturday the 5th I mean to take possession (lest the opportunity should elapse) of Holwood Hill, near Bromley, Kent (the name and description of my new residence). I shall continue to give punctual attendance, every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, in Downing Street, and the rest of the week at said Holwood Hill, till the meeting of parliament. Did you imagine I should ever be able to give so exact an account of my intended motions for three months to come? At any of the three places, namely, Brighthelmston, Downing Street, or Holwood, I can answer for your finding a good bed, within the respective periods I have mentioned. Adieu.

Yours ever,

W. PITT

TO LORD MUNCASTER, MUNCASTER CASTLE,  
CUMBERLAND.

King's Highway, Oct. 20, 1786.

My dear Muncaster,

I shall not begin by apologizing to you for my silence, but by taking you to task for yours. You have no such cause to plead as I have, and to expect a half-blind man to be as good a correspondent as one that

has the perfect use of his eyes, and in my circumstances to call on me to return your letter for letter, is so far from putting things on an equal footing, that I am astonished such a proposition should be countenanced by an inhabitant of a country, which having been of late so much engaged in making treaties,\* ought to be ready at every principle of equitable negotiation. When I fix these as the terms of our epistolary connexion, I shall *put you on the footing of the most favoured nation*, and let that be sufficient.

I have often meditated, and still more frequently longed for, an excursion into your wondrous country; but have not been able to gratify my wishes, and am now bound for the south. My summer has been spent with my sister, the state of whose health, and the nature of whose complaint, rendered my society and support peculiarly acceptable. If you have ever known nervous people, you will fully enter into this. And while so near a relation would in any case have a right to such good offices, my dear sister's worth and affection give her a more than ordinary claim to my tenderness and regard. Since I left her, I have been for a few days at Leeds, consulting Mr. Hey about my eyes and general health. Frequent conversations with him have impressed me with the opinion of his skill. He does not express himself over-confidently, for which I like him the better; but he says that I may very reasonably hope, that by a perseverance in the plan he recommends, I shall gradually recover health and strength, in both of which he thinks I have suffered by living too low; and he advises a strict adherence to meat and wine, as the most trusty and effectual restoratives. I must do you the justice to recollect that this is the very system you yourself have so often preached up to me; and as is usual when people agree with us in opinion, I have no doubt of your admitting him to be a most judicious practitioner, on the mere strength of

\* Convention with Spain was signed July 14th; Treaty of Commerce with France, Sept. 26th.

his prescription. Another part of his directions is, that I should try *with caution* the Bath water, and this I shall possibly do before the meeting of parliament, though my motions are somewhat uncertain, for they will partly depend on the state in which I find poor Eliot and Pitt. I well know how feelingly you have sympathized with them.\* I don't believe there ever existed between brother and sister a more affectionate attachment, than between Pitt and Lady Harriet. Public business, however, will be an assistance to him in getting over the shock, by necessarily calling him from his own melancholy reflections; but I fear it will go hard with Eliot, whose moral temper is ill calculated for bearing up against such a stroke. If either of them should be in such a state, as that I should think my company would be of material service, I shall dedicate myself to this employment; if otherwise, to King Bladud.

O my dear Muncaster, how can we go on as if present things were to last for ever, when so often reminded by accidents like these, 'that the fashion of this world passes away!' Every day I live I see greater reason in considering this life but as a passage to another. And when summoned to the tribunal of God, to give an account of all things we have done in the body, how shall we be confounded by the recollection of those many instances, in which we have relinquished a certain eternal for an uncertain transitory good! You are not insensible to these things, but you think of them rather like a follower of Socrates than a disciple of Jesus. You see how frankly I deal with you, in truth I can no otherwise so well show the interest I take in your happiness: these thoughts are uppermost in my heart, and they will come forth when I do not repress my natural emotions. Oh that they had a more prevailing influence over my disposition and conduct; then might I hope to afford men occasion 'to

\* Lady Harriet Elliot, second daughter of the first Lord Chatham, died Sept. 25th, 1786.



glorify our Father which is in heaven ;' and I should manifest the superiority of the principle which actuated me, by the more than ordinary spirit and activity by which my parliamentary, my domestic, and all my other duties were marked and characterized.

Mr. Hey did not advise me to write as though I were a sound man, and I must not forget that I am crippled in my operations, for though in the heat of action I forget my aches and sprains, I shall only feel them the more when I am cold again. This letter is one continued egotism, yet my vanity will not suffer me to believe that it will be less acceptable to you on that account. I have not opportunity left to say a word of politics, to abuse the new peers, &c. &c.\* I will not lay aside my pen however without desiring my best remembrances to Lady M. & Co. and so saying I subscribe myself,

Yours ever,

W. WILBERFORCE.

REV. JOHN NEWTON TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Coleman Street Buildings, 15th November, 1786.

My dear Sir,

You see, that when I asked your permission to write, I really intended to make use of it. After what has passed, and your kindness and freedom with me, it might seem formal to ask leave; but I might have been deterred otherwise, through a fear that you might make a point of answering my letter; and I should not be willing either to put your eyes to an unnecessary trial, or to break into your time, of which I believe you have little to spare.

When I consider you in the hands of the Lord whom you serve, and who will preserve you immortal till the service he has appointed you in this poor world is com-

\* June 15th, Mr. Jenkinson was gazetted as Lord Hawkesbury; August 8th, Sir Harbord Harbord as Lord Suffield, and Sir Guy Carleton as Lord Dorchester.

pleted, I ought, perhaps, to be quite easy about you. Yet I hope the feelings, which I cannot wholly suppress when I think of those whom I love, though mixed with a blameable unbelief, are not wholly blameable in themselves. I conceive that the religion which is from above is not designed to divest us of the sensibilities and sympathies which seem to belong to humanity in its perfect state, and to be necessary to qualify us for the duties of social life, though it certainly ought to regulate them. I excused myself in this way for a degree of solicitude I feel, to know how you performed your journey. I approve and admire your motive for the mode of travelling which you chose; but I could not help wishing that, in consideration of the infirm state of your health, you had not obliged yourself to walk to the inn so early in the morning, nor to the hurry of a coach which goes from London to Bath in a single day. However, a line by your order from Mr. Cragg,\* informing me that your health is not worse than when we parted, will make me easy, and, I hope, thankful.

And now, what shall I say farther? I am not willing to send you much blank paper, though it will not cost you postage. I have an inexhaustible subject always at hand, and yet am frequently at a loss how to fill up a letter; and, at present, while I write, a harpsichord is tuning in my ears, which does not at all help my invention. Methinks I may compare myself to a harpsichord. How often in tuning, how seldom in tune, and how soon put out of tune again. My imagination, in particular, is an instrument, which seems not in my own power: happy am I when it is under a gracious influence; but at times it seems as if an evil genius had the command of the keys; then I am tortured with a medley of folly, discord, and confusion, from which I cannot run, nor can I stop my ears against it, for it is within me. Wonderful is the grace that can cause the voice of joy and melody to be heard, when but a little

\* His secretary.

before all was disorder and distress. If the Lord appears, the storm is hushed, and a calm succeeds.

I might have returned Mr. Lindsey's Works with Dr. Blair's Lectures; but as you were going from us, I detained them till I should have the pleasure of seeing you again. I thought to put them into your own hands, and to take the liberty of expressing my wish that you would keep them under lock and key. You have a promising household, who I hope profit by your well-directed endeavours to promote their edification. I think Mr. Lindsey's are dangerous books to be in the way of your servants. I thought to read them myself, but it was a foolish curiosity, and I was obliged to stop when I had proceeded a little way in the second volume; for though I was sensible of the sophistry and effrontery of many of his arguments and objections, yet somehow my mind was entangled and hurt; and after I had put the books away, it was two or three days before I was composed again. Now, as I conceive there is no creature upon earth who would be more wretched than I if Mr. Lindsey's scheme could be true; and as, through mercy, I have for many years had no more habitual doubt of the Saviour's eternal power and Godhead than of my own existence,—it may seem strange that my thoughts could be hurt by any thing in Mr. L.'s power to suggest. But I had no proper call or occasion which might justify my reading him at that time; and poison is not to be trifled with; for it may injure a good constitution, even though a powerful antidote might prevent it from proving mortal. But the unexperienced and unwary are often hurt by the fine words and fair speeches of those who lie in wait to deceive; therefore, as I might incautiously have burnt my own fingers with Mr. Lindsey's books, I could wish for the sake of others that *noli me tangere* were written in capitals upon them all.

I take up my pen this morning for the fourth time since I began my letter, so frequent are my interruptions. I love retirement and leisure, and I was long favoured with them at Olney; London has brought me

into very different scenes ; but as I believe it to be the post which the Lord allotted me—which I did not contrive for myself, nor take a single step towards the procuring,—I am satisfied with it, and thankful for it. My apparent opportunities for usefulness are greatly enlarged ; and this ought to be my first object, to which all personal considerations should give place—for I am not my own ; nor was I brought from Africa, and redeemed from the bondage of Satan, to live to myself. If I may venture to say of the Lord in the apostle's words, *His I am, and Him I serve*, then I may cheerfully leave the how, the how long, and the where, and all circumstantial matters to him : not that my appointment seems to call for much resignation ; I am certainly honoured and favoured ; I have many comforts at home, many kind friends abroad ; my ministry is acceptable ; I live in peace ; and am mercifully sheltered from the storms of discord, animosity, and confusion, by which many are agitated. Can I even desire more ? Such, however, is the ingratitude and inconstancy of the human heart, that it is no small mercy to be able to say, I have learned to be content, even in a favourable situation. You likewise, Sir, are in your post, and yours is a post of honour. Many, perhaps, who view you from a distance, envy you, and would be glad to change places with you : I love and respect you, but I do not envy you : perhaps you have less time at your own disposal, and meet with more things in your path, which do not accord with your inclination, than myself. But if you are, upon the whole, where and what the Lord would have you to be, this thought reconciles you to the unavoidable which are connected with your situation ; and I hope great usefulness to the public, and to the church of God, will be your present reward.

To you, as the instrument, we owe the pleasing prospect of an opening for the propagation of the Gospel in the Southern Hemisphere. Who can tell what important consequences may depend upon Mr. Johnson's\* going to New Holland ? It may seem but a small event at present : so a foundation-stone, when laid, is small



compared with the building to be erected upon it ; but it is the beginning, and the earnest of the whole. This small beginning may be like the dawn which advances to a brighter day, and lead on to the happy time when many nations, which now sit in darkness and in the region of the shadow of death, shall rejoice in the light of the Sun of Righteousness.

I suppose it will not be news to say that poor Mr. Unwin is laid up with a putrid fever at Winchester. So far Mr. H. Thornton and he were on their way homeward when this embargo stopped their progress. It has brought him very low, and it will be several days yet before the fever will turn, but I am very glad to hear he is not judged to be in immediate danger. Lord ! what is man ? and what is life ? How soon may our prospects be clouded, and our plans disconcerted ! But what a comfort to be assured that in this state of uncertainty our afflictions do not happen to us at random, but are all under the direction of infinite wisdom and love, and all engaged to work together for good to them that love the Lord.

My letter has been four or five days in hand, but I am at length near the bottom of the sheet. If I treated you with ceremony, I might keep it as much longer, till I had time to write a fair copy. But I find more pleasure in treating you as a friend, who will allow me to write without restraint, and excuse what is amiss for the intention's sake. Mrs. Newton presents her respects.

I am, my dear Sir,

Very sincerely,

Your much obliged and affectionate servant,

JOHN NEWTON.

\* The first chaplain sent to New South Wales.

FROM WILLIAM HEY, ESQ.

Leeds, 1786.

Dear Sir,

As you wished me to commit to paper some of the hints which I took the freedom to offer to your consideration when I had the pleasure of seeing you at Leeds, I now sit down to give you a very brief enumeration of the topics I touched upon.

Since it is impossible to preserve religion invariably in any time without interruption; and since the corruption of mankind is constantly operating, so that the best societies degenerate, it seems the most prudent method, while the church is in a spiritual state to form a public liturgy and ritual, and to guard against the intrusion of the heterodox by a scriptural formulary or confession of faith. A church formed upon this plan has a suitable mode of worship for the devout, while religion flourishes in any place; it affords support and comfort to the pious minority, when the bulk of the people and the minister are not in a state of religion; and it proves a great help to any religious minister who may be employed in a place where few righteous are to be found.

Those congregations who submit the whole of public worship to the skill and abilities of the minister, may do very well while blessed with an able and pious man: but when the minister is unsound in his principles, and irreligious in his conduct, the people have nothing to make their public worship a spiritual service, unless the Word of God be read, or some devout hymns sung, which have gained the favour of the people by long use.

The power of patrons is grievously complained of by democratical congregations; and while the people remain devout, it would be happy if they could always choose their own minister: though they would not always choose the best, they would at least keep out the heterodox and profane. But what must be the case when the people themselves are fallen away, which will certainly happen? They will then choose such a minis-

ter as suits their corrupt taste; and their recovery is, therefore, past hope; for God does not take any other method than the ministry to recover bodies of men. A dissenting congregation that hath once deserted the truth and purity of the Gospel, seems to be lost for ever: this is not the case where the choice of the minister does not depend upon the people.

Experience confirms this reasoning. The nonconformist ministers were certainly in a more religious state than the majority of the clergy in the last century. They set out with every advantage at the close of that century; the act of toleration giving full liberty to constitute their churches on what they thought to be the most scriptural model. But what has been the consequence? Socinianism (another word for infidelity) has overrun them; they are departing with the greatest speed from the purity and truth of the Gospel. In this part of the kingdom almost every old dissenting congregation is Socinian—York, Leeds, Wakefield, Halifax, Bradford, &c. Their form of worship, and church government is the sole cause of this defect: they allow it, or rather they boast of it; but instead of thinking it a defect, they glory in it as a great excellency.

If then (through the invariable corruption of mankind) every dissenting congregation will in the long run become Infidel, or Socinian, if you please, it deserves our attention to use the best means to prevent the evil consequence in those who now are united to the church of England.

To prevent this, as well as to benefit the people immediately, let every pious clergyman unite his people into firm Christian society, as fast as he is enabled to awaken and convert them to righteousness; let this union be such as will most effectually attach them to the church, as well as to each other. Let every such minister remind his people that they must soon be deprived of his help, and will probably not obtain a successor of like mind: direct them to prepare for this event; show them how to conduct themselves under it: teach them to keep themselves as a spiritual phalanx



against all their enemies, waiting patiently and praying earnestly for another spiritual minister; but by no means leaving the fold before the shepherd arrives. A little reflection will point out the properest method of uniting the people upon this plan: and if once the people are well instructed in their privileges, it may be reasonably expected that one revival of religion would hardly be extinct before another would be begun. Our excellent public services afford great helps for such a plan.

By such a method the pious clergy would begin to see their own importance, and would more abundantly rejoice in the work of the Lord: their people would the more value them, and profit by their labours; and a holy seed would be scattered, that might in time fill the land. At least, this is doing all that human prudence, directed by the Word of God, can effect.

The irregularity of the means used to carry on the late work of God in this land, has given a cast even to the most regular of the spiritual clergy: they have caught the contagion of irregularity, and the church of England seems to be little better by their labours: the righteous are perpetually swept out of it. The clergy would make themselves a more respectable body (I speak only of the evangelical ones) if their conduct was more consistent with the rules of their church; if they strove more to inspire their people with a love for their public prayers and church order, and lead them to cultivate communion with God in a way that would not detach them from the church they profess to serve.

This, my dear sir, is the outline of the reasoning I used, and the plan I suggested. To enlarge, by way of proof or illustration, on every part, would fill a volume instead of a letter.

I profess myself a member of the church of England on the most deliberate consideration, yet I think myself happy in having some prejudices in its favour. Its defects, and such there are in all human institutions, are hereby lessened; its excellencies made more forcible. I am convinced that the word of God has left no complete plan for Christian worship or church government,

yet has commanded both, and has forbidden us (as individuals) lightly to break established customs. I see the traces of episcopal authority in the New Testament much more clearly than that of an equality of ministers; but I could submit to the church of Holland or Scotland, was I a Dutchman or a Scot, being persuaded that nothing is a lawful ground of dissent but the requirement of something sinful. I am not required to do any sinful act in order to preserve my union with the church; therefore I durst not leave it, though it had some imperfections. However, I rejoice that many of its offices are of the purest kind—strict copies of evangelical truth and purity.

The grand argument urged by the dissenters, on which the whole turns, is this,—that it is an infringement of the authority of Christ to make those things necessary which he has left undetermined. This, I am thoroughly persuaded, is a fallacy. It is done by every church under heaven. No Christian society can possibly subsist without it. No public worship, nor church government can be had without uniformity in order and rule—such order and rule is not to be found in the New Testament. *Ergo.*—But I must conclude.—May God bless you in all your labours. May it please God long to preserve our present privileges. I hear that the disaffected clergy are likely to make another attempt to destroy our excellent articles, &c. May He that sitteth above laugh them to scorn!

I am, in Christian affection,  
and sincere esteem, yours,  
W. HEY.

[These letters are inserted as illustrative of Wilberforce's statement concerning the cause of Mr. Pitt's pecuniary embarrassments.]

ROBERT SMITH, ESQ.\* TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Saturday, Brighthelmston, 1786.

My dear Wilberforce,

Indifferently as I thought of our friend's domestic management, I was not prepared for such an account as the box contained. The first article in Mr. Wood's paper, 791*l.* 6*s.* 3*d.* old bills unpaid, P—— could not have been apprized of, or at least could not have recollected, when he told us, that being about to receive three quarters of his salary, he should have enough to pay all the tradesmen.

I hope you will immediately procure these old bills, and that, for his sake, they may contain the demands of more tradesmen than those you have sent me, which I am sorry to say are deficient in so many material articles, that any general conclusion taken from them as to the amount of his expenses of housekeeping for last year, will prove fallacious.

The necessity, however, of bringing his affairs into some better order is now so apparent, that no man who is attached to his person, or values his reputation, can be easy while he knows it is undone. I hope, therefore, that you will be able to make P—— thoroughly sensible of the necessity of an immediate reform, not with a view to save money, but to retrieve his affairs. To carry the measures for this purpose into execution, it is necessary he should see the evil in its full extent, and what the consequence must inevitably be if he should continue his present domestic administration.

I have looked over many of the bills. From the manner in which they are made out, the butchers's particularly, it is imposible to say any thing precisely about them, but that the extravagance surprises me. For the

\* Afterwards Lord Carrington.

meat is sent in in great quantities, without particulars being mentioned. On a Saturday there is generally three or four hundredweight. To morrow I will write again; in the mean time,

I am, my dear Wilberforce,

Ever yours,

R. SMITH.

ROBERT SMITH, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Sunday.

My dear Wilberforce,

After I wrote last night, I employed myself in examining the first month's bills, viz. January, 1785. It is necessary to know how many persons there were in his family during that time: but I can scarcely conceive a private house in the kingdom where such a quantity of provisions, as are charged, could be consumed. It must also be recollected, that this month of January, 1785, parliament sat; and, therefore, he often either dined out, or was prevented making that meal regularly at home.

Inclosed is an abstract of each week's expense, together with the general amount of the whole month.

The butcher's bill only is 96*l*. Can it be possible that 3800 pounds of meat could be dressed in twenty-eight days, which (if on an average it cost 6*d*. per pound) must have been the case. The poulterer's, fishmonger's, and indeed all the bills, exceed any thing I could have imagined; and the charges are in general much higher than I pay.

It may appear ridiculous to speak of the expenses of my own family in comparison with P——'s; but when I have had company in the house at Hampstead for a week together, and have had every day as good dinners as my cook could dress (perhaps there were from thirty to thirty-five in family) the butcher's bill, at the highest, was 6*l*., and the baker's 2*l*. Now though P——'s bills ought certainly to be a great deal higher, yet when they come



to be from 20*l.* to 25*l.* for meat only, I cannot help suspecting much imposition.

The same extravagance seems to me to go through the whole. In October, when he was away the whole time, the butcher's bill is 40*l.*, and ten pounds of tea is drunk.

That you may perceive the truth of these remarks, I have inclosed in another cover one week's bills, viz. the second week in the account ending January 29th, which I preferred to the first week, because that may be considered as something extraordinary on account of the queen's birth-day. You will judge whether the consumption of so much provision could have fairly taken place. I brought a book with me for the purpose of carrying on the account through the year, in the manner of the inclosed paper; but so many bills are wanting, that it would be imperfect, and Wood seems to have done them very regularly in months.

I find myself much better, but by no means strong enough to encounter London at present. Mrs. Smith desires her love.

I am, my dear Sir,  
Very sincerely yours,  
R. SMITH.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MISS ——.

London, 22d February, 1787.

Indeed, my dear ——, I trust you do “wish to be right,” and on that ground you may justly be congratulated: so long as you preserve this frame of mind all will be well. This is the perfectness and simplicity of heart mentioned in Scripture with expressions of peculiar approbation: and that tenderness of conscience, that humility and watchfulness which accompany it, admirably dispose us to walk through this scene of temptations as pilgrims and strangers, who are seeking a better country in constant dependence on God's grace through

Christ, and looking for the guidance of that good Shepherd, who kindly promises that he will carry the lambs in his bosom and gently lead them that are with young. These are figurative expressions, but they are not unmeaning ones; we should translate them into common language and carry them about with us as the Eastern nations do their amulets and charms. Be not discouraged if you do not find your doubts so thoroughly eradicated as you flatter yourself they are; many good men, though in the main and unshakingly convinced of the truth of Christianity, have been grievously harassed by them, and I believe they are often the suggestions of the Tempter, which neither reason nor Scripture give us any rule to distinguish from the suggestions of our own imagination. These objections are often not particular, or directed to any one specific point, but it is rather a general sort of stupid doubting whether the whole be not a delusion. Perhaps the best way of combating the enemy is to fly from him in speculation and fight him practically. I mean when our reason on a fair inquiry has been once convinced, let us determine to act as if these things were true, and (such is the constitution of the human mind) we shall gradually find these incredulities dissipate, and obtain a more settled and deep-rooted satisfaction that "they are not idle fables."

Never forget that Jesus Christ is to be made unto His people wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption: were we ever to bear this in view and act on it, how much more wise and upright and holy should we be. It is pride and self-dependence that ruin us; whereas, were we to look with steadfast eye to the author and finisher of our faith, we should learn to despise both the pleasures and the griefs of this life, and long for that blessed day, which, disencumbering the people of God from their fleshly impediments, shall introduce them into that state of glory of which Christ died to purchase for them the everlasting possession. When you have any thing to say, write: I know you will give me credit for thinking of you, though you do not hear from me,

and therefore I shall be silent or not, as suits my convenience.

Yours ever affectionately,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MISS WILBERFORCE.

London, 30th March, 1787.

My dearest Sister,

You desire an answer by return of post, therefore though much hurried, I cannot delay writing to you.

I consider your doubts as the effect of bodily complaint rather than a refusal of assent to the truth of Christianity; though satisfied they again recur with undiminished force, and so they will continue to do, and you must be prepared to expect and learn to disregard them. Perhaps the best way of ridding yourself of them is to act as though they did not exist; and I think they afford not sufficient ground for your absenting yourself from the Communion. In receiving the Lord's Supper we make a public profession of our being willing to risk our all on Christ and to appear before our Maker, relying on His merits alone for our favourable acceptance with Him; we also solemnly devote ourselves to His service, and declare that we will endeavour to live to His glory, as those whom he has purchased, &c. Now in all this you could join from the bottom of your heart; and if fears and hesitation and doubts distract you, remember the poor man in the gospel, "Lord, I believe; help Thou my unbelief." At all events, however, do not distress yourself in debating whether you shall communicate or not, but comfort yourself, by the assurance of Christ that His yoke is easy, and that the pure in heart, they who are simple in their views and mean honestly, shall be blessed. Perhaps I may see you before Easter Sunday: I find our vacation is to be five or six days longer than I was aware of: Milner is very indifferent, and I could like to be a little with him during the recess. You also enter into my plan, and perhaps you



would meet me at Cambridge or somewhere, and tour it for a few days. I think the scheme might be of advantage to all of us: but all is at present undetermined; let me know what are your feelings about it without a moment's loss of time.

Yours ever,

W. WILBERFORCE.

REV. WILLIAM MASON TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Aston, April 2, 1787.

Dear Sir,

I am sorry that you took the trouble of using your eyes in writing to me on such a trifling occasion. I solicited you by Mr. Duncombe, purely that I might not put you to that expense of eyesight. I hope, however, as you make no complaint on that score, that you are now better than when I had the pleasure of seeing you at Aston. I will only say that the person whom I recommended, having been long in the custom-house service, and grown into years with a numerous family also, might be a proper object of advancement, if any additional officers (as were expected) should be made in that department. I did not look so high for him as to the office of a landwaiter on the present establishment.

The word establishment leads me by a very natural epistolary connection to the great ecclesiastical question which has so lately been agitated in Parliament, about which I have not been so solicitous as perhaps I ought to have been, but which I think has been decided in the best way it could. It is certain, or in parliamentary phrase I am free to say, that the majority of those who enjoy the first honours of the establishment, and possess its greatest emoluments, do not act in such a way as to do that establishment all the credit that they might; and it is equally certain, that those who are ambitious of obtaining the same honours, do it generally by means which tend equally to its discredit; yet discredited as it is, even to make me almost ashamed of my

profession, I think it better than no establishment at all, and that I am of opinion it soon would have been, if this as a previous question had been carried. On the other hand, there appears now to be so strange a change of tenets in a great part, if not the principal body of the Dissenters, and their teachers disseminate certain opinions so boldly (I had almost said blasphemously,) that I think they have little right to find more than toleration from those who have the power to prevent their having it; if to those considerations be added those enthusiastic notions and extreme Calvinistical doctrines which others propagate with so intemperate a zeal, and in so irregular a manner, it seems to me that the present moment is, of all others, the most unfit to hazard a change of the present existing laws on this subject. But as I know not how either you or your colleague voted on the question, I am perhaps calling another important matter into question—videlicet, the wisdom of my representatives: be this as it may, I will not affront the candour of either of you by making an apology. I shall be sorry if the part Mr. Pitt has taken in this business should in any degree hurt him as a minister: it cannot do that without hurting the dearest interests of those who may be the most offended at him, for I am persuaded that the motion originated from one who made the Dissenters only the cat's-paw of his own ambition—I do not mean Charles Fox, though he alone will reap all the popularity, if any popularity can be gained by it.

I who have no double knocks at my door, may be, perhaps, excused for being doubly noisy with my pen when I write to a friend who has. Therefore I am hugely prompted to add to this long letter a few short stanzas which I writ on a late occasion, though they have no other merit than that of coinciding with a sentiment which you delivered in parliament; that merit, however, I am vain of, or else I should not trust them out of my bureau, though with a strict injunction of your not letting them out of yours: their publication would

hurt certain persons, whose friendship, though I have lost, I still esteem too much in any sort to offend.

TO MR. PITT, ON HIS CONCLUDING HIS COMMERCIAL  
TREATY, 1787.

When thy great sire, on that bright car of state  
Which now thou guid'st, taught Britain's foes to feel,  
Th' attendant Muse remark'd how Holles sat  
A fluttering "fly on Glory's chariot-wheel."  
Still from the putrid mass which bred that fly,  
New insects rise, which buzz and aim to sting;  
To stop its course the dusky phalanx try,  
And 'gainst its fervid axle scorch their wing.  
Proceed, sage youth! and long that car command:  
Thy father's fame with thine, fair truth shall blend.  
His vigour saved from foreign foes the land,  
Thy prudence makes each foreign foe a friend.

The fourth line, I must hint to you, alludes to an epigram published at the time, which concluded with the following fine line,—

"A fly of state on Glory's chariot-wheel."

The Duke of Newcastle imputed this epigram to me, and I believe never forgave it. I did not however write it, nor could ever find out who did, though I always suspected it was Dr. Akenside. Adieu, my dear Sir, and believe me with great sincerity,

Your most obliged  
and faithful Servant,

W. MASON.

P. S.—As Mr. Duncombe has never written to me since I pestered him with two letters by two succeeding posts, I hope he will come to make his apology in person ere this reaches you. Any man but myself would have come to town to attend that affair, as it is certainly what the world calls of great consequence to my property. I trust it with you and Mr. D., and am sure if any thing can be done you will do it.

TO WILLIAM HEY, ESQ. LEEDS.

London, May 29th, 1787.

My dear Sir,

I trust in a very few days you will hear of a Proclamation being issued for the discouragement of vice, of letters being written by the secretaries of state to the lords-lieutenant, expressing his Majesty's pleasure, that they recommend it to the justices throughout their several counties to be active in the execution of the laws against immoralities, and of a society's being formed in London for the purpose of carrying into effect his Majesty's good and gracious intentions. I have been some time at work, the matter is now I hope brought to a crisis; and the persons with whom I have concerted my measures, are so trusty, temperate, and unobnoxious, that I think I am not indulging a vain expectation in persuading myself that something considerable may be done. It would give you no little pleasure, could you hear how warmly the Archbishop of Canterbury expresses himself: the interest he takes in the good work does him great credit, and he assures me that one still greater, to whom he has opened the subject in form, and suggested the measures above mentioned, is deeply impressed with the necessity of opposing the torrent of profaneness which every day makes more rapid advances. What think you of my having myself received a formal invitation to cards, for Sunday evening, from a person high in the King's service.

I mean the society to publish a list of its members, and an account of its institution, when sufficiently numerous and respectable. It should consist of persons of consequence in every line of life, the professions, members of both Houses, merchants in the city, aldermen, &c. I have no doubt of the Duke of Montagu's accepting the office of president, and have reason to believe that the Archbishop of Canterbury will give us his name, in which case the rest of the bench will follow his example. The objects to which the committee will direct their attention are the offences



specified in the Proclamation,—profanation of the sabbath, swearing, drunkenness, licentious publications, unlicensed places of public amusement, the regulation of licensed places, &c. One good consequence that will result from the institution of a society stamped with such authorities, may be the inducing well-meaning and active men to act as magistrates or constables, who have now so little encouragement to discharge obnoxious duties with fidelity and strictness.

It is singular, that whilst we have been cautiously and with measured steps proceeding to the desired object, our Pontefract friends have got before us. Much use I trust may be made of their resolutions. We mean to transmit them with directions for the formation of societies throughout the country. I need not add, till all this comes to your ears through some other channel, you must be silent on the subject.

Believe me to be ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO REV. E. FREWEN.

Bath, 31st July, 1787.

My dear Frewen,

As my last letter required an answer, I should be a little surprised at my not having heard from you, if, knowing from my own experience that one is always most backward in discharging epistolary debts when there is the most leisure for that employment, I had not, very naturally, attributed your silence to the circumstance of your college labours being at an end for the summer, which makes you an idle man: but though this state of vacuity, as Dr. Johnson would call it, has operated to my disadvantage in one respect, I hope to profit from it in another: I am about to spend a month or five weeks, or thereabouts, in company with my mother and sister, either by the sea-side, or in touring, or both. Now (we know each other well enough to blurt out our proposals *sine ambagibus*) . . will you join our party? The first effect of this proposition is to



make you rise from your chair and take two or three turns across the floor ; well, that being over, and a certain look that you give a person for a minute or two in silence before you open upon him, I hope your first answer will be a loose expression of good disposition towards this scheme ; in which case I will trust to the merit of the project itself for gaining you over completely. I mean to quit this place in about ten days (observe my month or five weeks is from and after that period) ; within that time you could probably arrive here, and I can find room for you in my lodgings, arrive when you will ; but if you cannot be here so soon, I would write to you at any place you might appoint, to fix on some other rendezvous ; though, as the scene of action with us will most likely be either the West or Wales, Bath is so little out of your way to the one or the other, and affords such opportunities of conveyance to every part of the world, that perhaps you could not do better than steer your course to it in the first instance ; at all events let me hear from you by return of the post, because I shall back my sails, and use other sea artifices, to give you time to come up with me.

As for my objects in the expedition, they are fresh air, and exercise, and ease : but the idea of business is not quite excluded with me. I shall carry books, and I hope read them. There is a pleasure in the society of friends with whom one is on so easy a footing, as that both parties may be either solitary or social at will, without fear of offence, or even condescending to give a reason for the preference. I have asked little Cookson to be one, and it is not quite impossible but that old Milner will also *addere pondus*. This is throwing additional weight into the scale, and I hope will turn the balance in my favour, though before it might be trembling on the beam. The post is this instant going off. I can only just say adieu.

Yours, very truly,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ROBERT SMITH, ESQ.  
[afterwards LORD CARRINGTON].

Plymouth, 4th September, 1787.

My dear Bob,

When you last wrote you intimated an intention of visiting the Rhine ; it is far the best lion in the neighbourhood of Spa ; but to enter fully into the merits of the beast, you should have been in our circumstances, who, after being jumbled almost to a jelly by incessant travelling in post-chaises, felt a double pleasure in gliding smoothly down that majestic river. I am leading a rambling life as well as you. My mother, and sister, and an old Johnian acquaintance or two joined me on my leaving Bath about three weeks ago, and since that time we have been lounging about the southern coast of Devonshire. It is from Plymouth that I now address you.

I assure you, that nothing I ever saw pleased me so much as the sights of this place and neighbourhood, where within one little circle is collected almost every interesting and beautiful object in nature ; nor is it possible without a sensation of gratitude towards Him from whose bounty we derive all our comforts, to enjoy the numberless conveniences and luxuries one meets with in our own country in so superior a degree, and to behold the universal aspect of wealth and plenty that prevails, and the abundance of whatever tends to the accommodation of life. I know your heart too well to doubt your having often sympathized with me in this feeling ; but if I mistake not, you will be more than ever sensible to it after your continental tour, though you will not visit any of those parts which are calculated to call it up in its full force.

We arrived at Dartmouth the very day after poor Holdsworth was carried to his grave : his youth and family situation with a wife and five little children could not but bring you to my mind, and the recollection that but about fifteen months ago we entertained apprehensions on your account. I believe and trust that by care you will re-establish your constitution, for

which you have a good security in the knowledge and perfect comprehension of your disorder; and it is my earnest prayer that you may be long a comfort to us in this life, and at length quit it for a better. Another friend of mine, for whom, indeed, I had the highest esteem, though we had not spent time enough together for the establishment of a warm personal affection, has been lately hurried out of the world by a putrid fever; his name was Baynes,\* of Gray's Inn, a special pleader, who was soon to be called to the bar, and with every hope of success in his profession that could be founded on an excellent understanding and great application; but besides these intellectual accomplishments, he had more simplicity of intention and steady honesty than almost any man I ever knew: except Pitt, I scarce know any one from whom I thought the public might, perhaps, some time or other, receive so much advantage.

The wandering way in which I have been of late has prevented my hearing any news; but it is possible I may have a letter to-night, and will keep mine open till then, that if I learn any thing worth telling you I may insert it. I hope Mrs. S. improves from change of air, and does not suffer greatly from the filthiness of continental inns. Adieu, my dear R. I am ever most truly and affectionately yours,

W. W.

Ask Mrs. S. if she does not find the foreign money productive of great confusion in her accounts.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MISS ———.

Cambridge, 8th November, 1787.

My dear M.,

It gives me pleasure to observe that, though you chide me for not letting you hear from me, you allow me credit for such a sincere concern for your welfare, as not to impute my silence to forgetfulness. Indeed,

\* Vide Dr. Parr's Works, vol. iv. p. 567.

you do me no more than justice in this acquittal; for whether I tell you so or not, you are daily in my thoughts and prayers.

What is it in truth that you have avowed, but that you have not attained to that stability of mind which you desire, that in spite of the value and brightness of the heavenly prize, you find yourself perpetually drawn aside from the pursuit of it by temporal objects. We are all of us apt to be unreasonable in our expectations of the progress we are to make in the Christian course: ere we have well begun our journey, we look on ourselves as at the end of it, and deem it hard if we enjoy not those comforts which are reserved for those only who have borne the burthen and heat of the day; in both these respects let us be more moderate, and neither be cast down if we find not our attainments equal to our wishes, nor disgusted if our religious exercises do not afford us all that pleasure which we might hope to derive from them. But then let not this produce in us such an acquiescence in our present state as may terminate in our sitting down contented with it: we must learn to press forward, humbly depending on God's help for the success of our labours and resigned in all respects to his sovereign will: persevere; and "may the God of grace, when you have suffered awhile, comfort, strengthen, 'stablish, settle you." I need not suggest to you the benefit of religious contemplation, or how much more than reading it tends to lift the soul beyond the fogs and vapours of this nether atmosphere.

The precise question which you put to me is of great nicety: and if it had been put to me by almost any one else, I believe I should have declined answering it in any other than those general terms which you forbid me the use of. "How far you may indulge in amusements without danger?" With respect to these same amusements, I conceive no rule can be prescribed of universal application and use—none that will solve to every one the several cases which occur in life, under the very different circumstances of different men; and yet unless we lay down for ourselves beforehand some determinate



principle of action, when the time for decision comes we shall be at a loss how to proceed, and judging hastily and under an improper bias, our conclusion will most likely be erroneous. What then is to be done? What but that every one read his Bible with simplicity of heart, that he there observe the temper and conduct our Saviour prescribes to his disciples, and then, looking into and weighing the particulars of his own state, discover how he may best acquire the one and practise the other. Where any thing is directly contrary to the laws of God there we ought to resist as stubbornly as possible . . . now the playhouse seems to me to fall under this description; and in order to possess you with my sentiments on this subject, I will enclose you a little Essay which contains almost all I think, and will spare me the trouble of a recital . . . but there are other diversions of a more dubious nature—balls, concerts, cards, &c. It is impossible here to judge for another; in certain situations it may be expedient to partake of them, rather than offend those with whom you may be living, &c., but not as amusements to be enjoyed, but temptations to be undergone. It is easy to see that the whole current of Scripture sets against that disposition to seek for our comforts in the vanities of life and the enjoyments of sense, which is too natural to us all: it directs us to pleasures of a more exalted kind, to joys of a superior nature; and therefore that systematic balling, and concerting, and carding, is really adverse to the spirit of Christianity—observe, I say systematic, for it is reduced to a system: it is not an occasional but a constant and habitual misapplication of time and money, and, what is worse than all, of affections. But then we are not to abstain from these indulgences in which the world allows itself, and value ourselves on our abstemiousness, for that will bring on a proud and a morose spirit: the true way is, to endeavour to supplant the fondness for them by the love of better things, “to let our rejoicing be the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity we have had our conversation in the world,” to learn to delight in the consciousness of His protection



whose favour is better than life, and in the anticipation of those pleasures which are at His right hand for evermore. Could we arrive at this blessed temper, what mankind terms amusements and diversions would be to us either tedious or disgusting; and though on some occasions we might deem it expedient to conform, yet we should do it for the sake of others, not for our own. Of all others, it is perhaps the most dangerous practice for us to draw a line, and as it were *pale in* some of the common amusements in which we may judge that we ought to participate from such prudential motives as I am alluding to, and then to go on in the constant use of them in unsuspecting security: the habit of mind this brings on is very destructive indeed of the vital spirit of Religion, and should be guarded against with all care. Now, were I to say, "You may safely play at cards or go to the Assembly," &c. would there not be a danger that, set at ease as it were by my permission, you would look on these, if I may say so, *as fair game*?

I have said enough to make you understand me: the Christian's motto should be, "Watch always, for you know not in what hour the Son of Man will come." In proportion as you may find yourself compelled to engage in diversions you may not thoroughly approve, examine yourself with more diligence, be more constant in your devotions, act like one who, fearing that poison might lurk in his daily food, guarded against its effects by the daily use of antidotes. Remember that it is the great business of Religion to purify our hearts, and inspire us with a more entire longing for those perfections, which are to constitute the glories and happiness of our future being. . . .

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MISS WILBERFORCE.

26th November, 1787.

Your letter, my dear sister, has been in my thoughts at intervals ever since I received it, and I take up my

pen to reply to it with no little reluctance ; but I am sure you will expect my answer with anxiety, and it would be unkind and selfish to delay it any longer. I well know the tenderness of your mind, and it grieves me to say any thing that will wound it : nor do I suffer less from the apprehension that I am about to give pain to my dear mother. How can I but do so, when I recollect the many proofs I daily experience of her kindness and affection, and, above all, that I am indebted to her for the first of human benefits ; for, to the blessing of God on those religious principles and impressions which she instilled into us in our early years, it is to be attributed that I see the vanity of all the pursuits of this life, and with somewhat of a humble hope, through the mercies of my Redeemer, look forward to a better. Yet in spite of all these considerations, I must speak out : the appeal you make to me is too forcible to be resisted, and when I reflect that I shall have to account for my answer to it at the bar of the great Judge of quick and dead, I cannot, I dare not, withhold or smooth over my opinion. I must be as expeditious as possible ; you know I have generally enough to do, and at this moment I am particularly pressed to prepare for the opening of the session to-morrow.

In one word, then, I think the tendency of the theatre most pernicious. This is my decided sentiment, not taken up lightly, but on mature consideration. I have not leisure to state to you at large the grounds on which it rests, and it is better not to take up the question than not to do it complete justice. The bias under which you have weighed it is evident from the arguments you urge, which are unworthy of your understanding. You are sensible that it is not enough that your own principles and frame of spirit are so settled, as to be in no danger . . . though which of us can say so in such a case, seeing that we pray to be delivered from evil only on the ground of our not being led into temptation, which it is a mockery of God to ask, if we run into it with our eyes open. You view the matter in the light of example, yet you talk of going only to one or two plays, and of not

staying the farce, &c.: why, how will the generality of those who see you there know your motives for not being as frequent an attendant as formerly, and for not remaining during the whole performance? It would be an affectation of humility to deny that your authority has very great weight in the town of Hull, and it may be thought too that my advice has some influence over you. Will not, then, your presence at the amusements of the theatre sanction them in the minds of all who see you there? At that day when a strict account shall be taken of all our actions, and when it shall not be the least inquiry, how we have used our credit and influence amongst men, may not the players have to allege that by your attendance they were countenanced in their exercise of a profession, which must be allowed to be highly unfavourable to their future happiness? May not the same be said by some young unguarded people, who, forgetting the Scripture precept to avoid the beginnings of evil, there yielded to propensities, and formed connections, and acquired habits, which terminated in a dissolution of the moral principle, and finally in their irrecoverable ruin?

Where we do not think things perfectly defensible in themselves, there is an essential distinction between the compliance of omission and that of commission. For instance, I had much rather abstain from attending the place of worship I might most of all wish to frequent, than go anywhere where my presence would give a sanction to something actually and positively wrong. Suffice it to have hinted at this difference, of which I think you will see the force.

Yet after all this, as I have the highest sense of the duty of obeying a mother's commands, and of gratifying a mother's wishes, I cannot, if my mother makes a point of it, absolutely advise you not to give way: but I know my mother too well not to be assured, that whatever she may have said or thought on the first suggestion, she will not make a point of it on more cool deliberation. Sensible as I am to the integrity of her mind and the force of her affection, I am convinced she would not insist

on it or press it strongly, but under the idea of your not suffering from the compliance; whereas I am equally convinced it would be a source of lasting uneasiness to you. I trust my dear mother will do justice to the motives which have compelled me thus to express myself, for I would not conceal from her what I have said to you. I shall be extremely anxious to know how she feels and you determine.

With respect to our meeting in the winter I bear it in mind, and shall be glad if it can be accomplished. I am almost clear I cannot go farther than Cambridge from the House, and I would not draw my mother from home. I shall be very glad to hear that Mrs. S. accompanies you; I think of her much, and often with extreme solicitude. O! my dearest sister, how glorious a change will it be, if ever we all meet beyond the reach of all those chances and accidents to which we are exposed in this uncertain state of existence, and with hearts overflowing with gratitude towards that Saviour, who so loved us that He gave Himself for us to suffer death upon the cross; if we enter into the possession of that happiness which knows no limit of degree or duration: and may our connections be so formed, as to be thus continued beyond the grave, that with those whom we most affectionately regard and value, we may dwell for ever, where there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore!

May God Almighty bless you, my dearest sister, and calm and tranquillize your mind here, and conduct you to happiness hereafter.

W. WILBERFORCE.

LORD MUNCASTER TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.\*

Sunday, February 11th, 1788.

My dear Friend,

It has pleased the Almighty God to take unto himself the little angel spirit of my dearly beloved child.

\* Docketed "Poor Muncaster, truly pious and pleasing."



At about half-past nine last night his eyes were closed for ever. Praised be God, who so far graciously heard my prayer; he quitted this world without a convulsive pang or painful struggle. His little mind perfectly clear, and, till within a very few moments, his articulation good—it became weaker gradually, and less distinct, and his breath gently lengthened and had intervals, as if nature paused. It was at last so soft, that the ear mistrusted itself, and in the succeeding moment his pure spirit flew up, and he appeared rather to cease to live than to die. It was the soft transition of innocence from this to a state of perpetual rest and felicity. God of His mercy support me under my sufferings, and enable me to bear them with all due resignation to His divine will. I kiss the rod, but in truth it scourges me sorely. Heaven preserve you from every misfortune, prays your disconsolate friend,

M.

REV. JOHN NEWTON TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

London, September 12th, 1788.

My dear Sir,

I heartily thank you for your favour of the 6th instant, and for the very obliging terms in which you write. I have nothing to return but expressions of respect, gratitude, and affection; but they are honest, and dictated by my heart, and therefore I hope will not be unacceptable to you.

Wednesday, last week, we went to Blackheath and staid till Saturday; while there your letter came; so that I had an immediate opportunity of mentioning you to Mrs. Wilberforce,\* and reading her a part of it. She spoke of you with great regard, and seemed to wish to hear from you. She is waiting the Lord's hour of deliverance with a spirit remarkably composed, and seems neither weary of life nor afraid of death.

\* His aunt.



It comforts me, indeed, to think that I am remembered by you in your best hours. How ought this to bind me to pray for you ! In this way Christians may be mutually beneficial to each other ; whether weak or strong, wise or illiterate, in public or in private life, they are upon the same level before their common Lord and Father, with whom there is no respect of persons. Yes, sir, you have many praying for you, and among them not a few who are really fervent in prayer, and have the liberty of children at a throne of grace. It is hoped and believed that the Lord has raised you up for the good of His church, and for the good of the nation. This makes you truly a public person, and gives you a place in the hearts of many who never saw you, and whom you will never know. But *I* feel, as I ought, a peculiar interest in all that concerns you ; not only because I have the honour and pleasure of your personal acquaintance, and am indebted for many instances of your kindness, but especially because you were pleased to make me the first acquainted with the Lord's goodness to you. The joy that I felt and the hopes I conceived when you called on me in the vestry at St. Mary's I shall never forget. From that hour you have been peculiarly dear to me ; the seeds of regard for you which were then sown in my mind, have been flourishing and strengthening ever since, and I trust will continue to flourish, while I am capable of remembering any thing.

There is a tax upon your situation, and you feel it. I could wish you the same liberty, with respect to the employment of your time and the choice of your company which I enjoy myself, but I know in your path it is impracticable. I am sorry your prospect of retirement has been so much interrupted, but the consequence is pleasing ; you see a necessity for forming your future plans differently. It is thus, as I formerly hinted, the Lord teaches those who wait upon him the way in which they should walk ; not directly and at once, by advice they may receive from others, or by rules they may,

*a priori*, lay down for themselves, but gradually by experience. The knowledge they thus obtain becomes properly their own, an inward principle, and therefore efficacious. Though the wisdom which we ask of God is freely given, yet with respect to the way in which we obtain it, we may be said to pay, and sometimes to pay dearly for it. Yet it is well worth the purchase, whatever it may cost us. If the heart be upright and the desire to serve him be simple and genuine, the main thing is secured, and these hinderances will eventually prove helps; and even the slips and mistakes we may make, will tend to make us walk more firmly. There are innumerable cases in life to which the general rules in Scripture do not directly and explicitly apply, nor will books of casuistry afford us satisfaction. But love is the best casuist; and a sincere desire of pleasing God, by degrees, by the result of our own reflections, and by repeated approximations, will lead us nearer and nearer to that middle path, which lies between the extremes of needless singularity and improper compliance. Communion with God is the great point: whatever is found to have a tendency to damp or indispose our spirits for this, must be either frankly given up, or, if continued, it must be a cross or a burden, which we verily believe it is His pleasure, all things considered, that we for the present should bear. People of indifferent health, and who heartily wish to be well, are led by their feelings to form a regimen, and abstain from many kinds of food, not from the idea that they are unwholesome in themselves, but because experience proves that such diet will not agree with them. In spirituals we are all valetudinarians, liable to be hurt by a breath of air; and many things which might be harmless if we were quite well, are found to have an aptitude to nourish our disease. Such is the analogy between body and mind, that we cannot long be comfortable in either without an habitual self-denial.

I think Mr. Simeon knows two persons whom he thinks proper, and who are willing to go to Bengal.

And I know one or two men who would think about it, if there was an actual opening, and they had due information of the nature of the service. If the Lord favours the design, I little doubt but He will prepare and point out suitable instruments. I suppose it is not necessary that the whole number of eight should go at one time. As to the Pelew Islands, if we could send them a missionary by a balloon, it might be well. But I hardly know how to wish that government should attempt to form a settlement among so simple, untainted, and kind a people. I could almost wish they might never see another ship, unless one in distress and wrecked like the *Antelope* should give them a fresh occasion of exercising their generous hospitality. Alas! what a ruined people will they be, if *we* make a settlement upon their shores, to communicate to them wants and vices and diseases, to which they are at present happily strangers.

Your letter mentions nothing of your own health, and therefore does not contradict my hope that you are pretty well. Nor do you say a word about your return to London, but Sir Charles Middleton told me once that we might expect you in October, which will soon be here. How glad should I be, were it possible, to hide you a few days in Coleman-street buildings! May the Lord bless you, my dear Sir, and make you a blessing. I hope I shall never give you reason to think of me otherwise than as

Your most obliged, obedient,  
and affectionate servant,  
JOHN NEWTON.

RT. HON. W. PITT TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Holwood, October 14th, 1788.

My dear Wilberforce,

I well knew what the kindness and affection of your mind would feel for Eliot and myself.\* I have had

\* On the death of his favourite sister, Lady Harriet Eliot.

the comfort of finding him, on my return from Somersetshire, beginning to recover a little, and I have left my mother as well as I could venture to hope. I will add no more, for I am sure I need not say how sensible I am to your friendship on this sad occasion, as well as on every other. Prettyman has sent me your letter, mentioning the curate you have found for New Holland. I will take care of the business, and let you know as soon as the stipend, &c. is fixed. I conclude he will be ready, if he takes the charge, immediately.

Pray let me know what your notions are, when you have fixed them, and how soon there is a chance of seeing you.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. PITT.

DUCHESS OF GORDON TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

- Gordon Castle, November 17th, 1788.

The newspapers inform me you have left the peaceful woods and wilds of Windermere, for the less pleasing scenes of political bustle. I hope the fair Hygeia is in your train, and that neither the cares nor duties of a London life will frighten her back to the nymphs and naiads of the grove. Perhaps in some of your trips from town you may visit Cambridge. Huntly is now a member of St. John's. It was you taught me to know that that college can form a mind with every virtue, and every talent that learning or philosophy can bestow. But it is his hour of social intercourse I am most anxious about: pray do let me solicit your friendship and protection for him—he will do you honour as a man, for his heart is without a fault; at the same time I have some doubts as to his application, and I dread still more a kind of playful wit he possesses, that makes gay dissipated company more pleasing than those his better judgment would approve of. Tutors in general give instruction like a task: few have the happy art to



mingle the useful and the agreeable together, though every body is sensible that knowledge acquired by conversation is infinitely the most pleasing. Books may awaken new ideas, but it is hearing different opinions that leads reason to judge and form just conclusions. I once intended writing to the Premier, to beg he would recommend him, but thought that it would be improper in his situation; if you do not think so, show him my wishes, as I should like of all things that my beloved boy went under such happy auspices.

Your admirer, Dr. Beattie, was making many anxious inquiries about you. Ten years ago he wrote upon the humane subject, that has lately interested you—I mean the slave-trade—for the humane subject can be no explanation to one who “does a vast of good,” as the poor man at Windermere told me. I wished Dr. Beattie to publish, but he said the arguments had been all brought forward by others; he is to send them me, and if you have any desire to read them, you may command them. Charlotte and I have had many delightful rambles through the unexplored part of this romantic country, but my mind is so occupied with the dreadful event that seems to hang over this nation, that I can write or think of nothing else. The all-wise Director of events may give us such another king, but for some time we must fall in the eyes of all Europe, for nothing but experience will convince surrounding nations that Great Britain is the same.

Charlotte sends her very best wishes.

Ever yours,

J. GORDON.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Palace Yard, June 14th, 1789.

Nay, my dear Muncaster, I can now contain no longer; but in spite of hurry, of lassitude, and of weak eyes, I must reply to your kind inquiries. I believe you and I



are tuned in the same key, as the musicians speak, and that we strike therefore in unison. Is it a proof of it that I feel your pouring out to me your joy in the prospect of a visit from your father, as a stronger proof of your affection, and consequently demanding my more grateful return, than all your expressions of solicitude about myself. To make me thus a partner in your joys is truly kind; and you do me no more than justice in believing I shall participate in them. And now I am ready to end my letter in the East Indian fashion. What can I say more? I dare not enter on the long budget that presents itself to my mind, and I am afraid of being drawn in if I tread but for a moment on some other ground that lies open to me.

Luckily in this dilemma enters old Matthew, with tidings that my carriage waits. Adieu. Believe me, ever most sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

Pitt's gout is really *bonâ fide* gout. He is better to-day, but will hardly be able to get down to the House to-morrow. Best remembrances to all at the great hall—small and great. Ever yours sincerely.

LORD MUNCASTER TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Muncaster House, near Ravensglass, October 29th, 1789.

My dear Wilber.,

Upon Monday last I put into execution what I mentioned to you in my last, and assembled the whole neighbourhood around, and at about half-past two Lady Muncaster and myself set forward at the head of the principal families in the neighbourhood, followed by a prodigious concourse of people, to lay the foundation-stone of the pyramid I purpose to erect, to record the king's happy return to his people, the nation's love of him, &c. When we got to the ground (which is upon some table-land in my far park, where I think you and Milner once rode to look at the view, which is prodigious)

giously extensive, commanding the whole country, and from whence you may see Scotland, the Isle of Man, Wales, &c. &c.) two cannon were fired to announce the ceremony being about to begin. A large circle was immediately formed round the place, and in the centre of it stood my faithful, trusty Atkinson, who with most audible voice proclaimed the purpose of our assembling: when he announced it, there burst from the whole multitude such a shout of "Long live the King," as seemed to rend the very air. The foundation-stone, which was a huge one indeed, was now surrounded by the several masons and workmen who were to fix it, and every gentleman and lady present placed upon the spot where it was to be laid coins of the king, which done, the stone was let to fall and cover them; cans of beer, . . for about half a dozen large barrels of stingo were carried thither for the purpose . . were filled for all to drink, "May the pyramid stand for ever!" with three times three; and a wonderful shout it was. *Trusty* then got upon the foundation-stone and sung "God save the King," with the additional stanzas to make it applicable to the moment, which I send you herewith. Then followed another discharge of beverage, to "Long lives to their Majesties, with uninterrupted health," &c. &c. The cannon immediately were fired several rounds, and the echoes were uncommonly grand and fine. The carriages were now brought, and we all returned to the Old House, where above three hundred sat down to dinner; and more mirth, loyalty, and heartfelt felicity for the time were not, I will venture to say, experienced under any roof in Christendom, than under that of Muncaster House, for the remainder part of that day. We were most fortunate in our weather—the day was a delightful one; and the people on the different surrounding hills—the sublime and magnificent features of Nature among which we were assembled—the rolling echoes thundering amongst the mountains—the loyal and joyful acclamations of the people—formed a something altogether more interesting and striking than I can possibly describe. I mean to have a room within the pyramid,

which I shall furnish with portraits of their Majesties, and with all the publications, &c. put forth upon that memorable occasion. Who knows but for ages hence this work may become a matter of useful record to posterity !

I have felt an additional motive besides the loyalty I feel in my own bosom, and my general sense of the conduct of particular persons upon that occasion, to erect this pyramid at the present juncture, because I now stand absolutely the only public man in this whole county, who acts with government ; for Lord Lonsdale's conversation, with that of his agents, respecting the minister Pitt, . . . whose abilities, they say, are gone—drowned absolutely in wine ; the king's health a mere delusion, and his relapse daily to be expected ; the Prince of Wales the best of all young men, and the prince and he the very best of friends ; and the Duke of Portland become the first toast at his table . . . all this clearly denotes him, in fact, whatever he may be in appearance, an opposition man ; therefore, every man here, the Dukes of Portland, Devonshire, Lords Carlisle, Egremont, Duke of Norfolk, Lord Lonsdale, and the members for the towns and county, are all opposition people. The people, by the reports spread of the impossibility of the king continuing well, have been led really to be as anxious in their inquiries of me after the true state of things above, as at this period last year ; and they firmly believed every post the confirmation would be received of his Majesty's having relapsed to be as bad as ever. I have therefore, I say, felt an additional wish in this matter, to do away the abominable endeavours to damp and destroy that loyalty and attachment in this part of the country, which I have the felicity to know has been again awakened. . . .

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

November 7th, 1789.

My dear Muncaster,

Though it be a labour to me to keep my pen in hand, having been obliged already this morning to use it till I feel nervous and tired, yet I cannot refrain from acknowledging the arrival of your last letter; and when you call on me to participate in your festivity, my feelings, used to sound in unison with yours, cannot refuse a note or two of sympathy. I am sure your eyes must have glistened on the 26th of October, and the whole must indeed have formed a truly splendid scene; the grandest, I dare say, to which old Scafell ever was witness. As for your inscription, I honestly declare to you that I cannot bear your perpetuating that pompous sentence of Thurlow's, whom you know to have been throughout on the point of putting out as long a tail as the veriest rat in either house of parliament; and whose conduct, if ever it be made public, must cover him with confusion;—meanwhile, you who are enlightened, though it may not be incumbent on you to remove the error, should at least not strengthen and confirm it. The reports concerning Pitt which you mention are indeed scandalous, but they do not surprise me: experience has taught me what to expect from a certain quarter, and at least, therefore, I shall not be disappointed.

I was much amused with your report of the proceedings at your late county meeting, and can see with my mind's eye some of the most conspicuous actors in that day's drama. It was in my contemplation to see our friend Harry, but I could not conveniently effect it. With great difficulty having drawn my mother out of her own easy chair, who finds an easy chair everywhere when once she is come forth, I am spending a few days with her at Sam Smith's, who desires, by the way, his remembrances to you, and who well deserves to be remembered. I mean, if I can, to call on Cookson at his living, but have promised, if possible, to pass some time at Holwood before the meeting of parliament. Direct



always to London. My ladies join me in kind regards to your fireside.

I am ever faithfully  
and affectionately yours,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

REV. DR. COKE TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

City Road, London, August 24th, 1790.

Sir,

I received your most kind, condescending letter, for which I return you my most grateful thanks.

Inclosed I have taken the liberty of sending you an account of the present state of our mission in the West Indies for the benefit of the negroes.

There is one point I feel a desire of touching upon, assured that your candour will excuse my further intrusion on your patience. Some have said (from the steps I was unavoidably necessitated to take on the continent of America, or entirely abandon that work) that I would, if possible, separate the whole Methodist connection in England and Ireland from the established church. I do assure you, Sir, upon the honour of a gentleman, and (which is in my view, and also I am confident in yours, abundantly greater) on the solemn word of a Christian, the assertion is utterly false. I not only wish for no such thing, but would oppose a separation from the establishment with my utmost influence, even if that, or a division in the connection, was the unavoidable alternative.

Pardon this liberty, and permit me to subscribe myself, with very great respect, Sir,

Your much obliged and very obedient  
and faithful servant,  
THOMAS COKE.



W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ TO W. HEY, ESQ.

Yoxall Lodge, November 3d, 1790.

Dear Sir,

Your packet reached me in safety, and I forwarded its inclosure to Mr. Brandreth. I rather take shame to myself that one cause or other has continually intervened to prevent my writing to him respecting the books which he kindly undertook to distribute for me. On the whole it now seems to me best, and you must give me credit for many and good reasons which I will not trouble you to read nor myself to dictate, that you should negotiate the matter for me with Mr. Brandreth, either sending him such books as you shall think most advisable, to the amount of five guineas; or by desiring him to supply himself with them, you furnishing him with a list for that purpose; or by his purchasing, to the above-mentioned value, according to his own discretion. You must make all necessary excuses for me.

I do not well know what reply to make respecting Mr. Marsden.\* Your account is not very favourable; but, as I know you are no flatterer, I take it for granted things are not worse than you represent them. I shall most likely have an opportunity of learning the state of things in London in about a fortnight, and you shall then hear from me again.

I inclose you a scheme (of which, on second thoughts, I may as well send you several copies), on which Mr. Gray and I have determined for the County Election Book. It explains itself, and therefore I need make no observations; only that I do not wish the names of any persons to be inserted, whose supposed real property is less than 100*l.* per annum, or personal than 2000*l.* sterling, except in any case wherein the influence is greater in proportion than the property, and may be deemed equal to the influence ordinarily accompanying the above amount; also, let the blank column

\* The Rev. Samuel Marsden, for whom Mr. Wilberforce subsequently obtained a chaplaincy in New South Wales.

for supposed influence be filled up with the initials "Li" for little,—“Mi” for middling,—“Gr” for great,—and “V. Gr.” for very great. The column for observation should contain remarks concerning the party’s connections, &c. . . *e. g.* whether he likes the leg or wing of a fowl best, that when one dines with him one may win his heart by helping him, and not be taken in by his “just which you please, sir.” Be so good as urge your friends to diligence, and, if possible, do not let them be informed that *I* have desired them to be set to work, but let an amiable confusion attend the business, like that of the institution of the Proclamation Society;\* in short, let them find themselves at work without knowing how it happened. Thus far my friend Gisborne’s hand has moved at my command. I now leave it free to its own spontaneous motions.

W. WILBERFORCE.

Now, Sir, you have professional ability enough to be aware that a man’s hand is as susceptible of fatigue as his head; and though I do not mean to allege that mine are absolutely in that predicament, yet when you are apprised that I have scribbled four letters just now for Wilberforce, you will be ready to admit that my understanding may be somewhat muzzy, and my fingers somewhat cramped. I shall therefore release you, after thanking you for the favour of your letter, and assuring you of the good wishes of, dear Sir,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

T. GISBORNE.

W. WILBERFORCE ESQ, TO THOMAS BABINGTON, ESQ.

London, May 7th, 1791.

My dear Babington,

Your letter of the second instant had prepared me for that of this morning, and I can scarce condole with you on the event it communicates. The idea of being

\* *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. i. p. 70.

separated for life from a beloved parent, and all the innumerable circumstances of endearment that term carries with it in your case, must deeply affect your sensibility; but even your sorrow, like that of St. Paul, does not exclude rejoicing; and to me, who am not on the spot, the scene presents a face of unclouded joy and even triumph. Oh! my dear friend, may you and I be equally ready when it shall please God to call us hence; and may we meet our blessed Saviour as a friend, and not as an enemy and an avenger. Meanwhile, may we be enabled to lay aside every weight, and the sin which does most easily beset us, *looking unto Jesus!*

What a superiority is there in Christian principles over those of men of the world, even in the view of temporal comfort and of social happiness. This sentiment is strongly impressed on me by the shameful spectacle of last night; more disgraceful almost, and (so are we constituted) more affecting, than the rejection of my motion.\* It happened that the chapter, which in a course of going through the prophet Isaiah met my eyes this morning, was the eleventh: turn to it, and contrast the blessed effects of the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom, the spirit of love and concord that it will diffuse, mentioned in the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th verses, with a long tried and close worldly connection† of five-and-twenty years, trampled to pieces in the conflict of a single night. I really scarce recollect being so much hurt at any thing, and I have been lamenting ever since that I did not myself interfere, though I am told it was better for me to be silent. Adieu, my dear friend; think of me—pray for me—I greatly need your prayers. With kind remembrances,

I am ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

\* For the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

† Between Burke and Fox.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE REV. DR. COOKSON.

London, May 9th, 1791.

My dear Cookson,

If I could have satisfied myself with one part of your alternative, you would have received an immediate answer to your letter; but it seemed monstrous to write to you by any other than my own hand, and my eyes being indifferent, and my epistolary debts many, I am rather commendable for taking up my pen now, than culpable in not having done it before. I thank God I am pretty well, though my having in some degree shifted my load off my own shoulders on those of the House of Commons, hardly makes me feel a whit lighter. I still have a wallet full: a man can carry no more than he can, and this physical necessity is commonly the determiner of the quantum of my burthen; but then into this burthen I reckon great dinners and other such *relaxing* and recreating operations, as are to me more of labour in their effects, than even business itself.

In the midst of my bustle Sunday interposes itself, and is a real relief. I extremely wish you could hear Mr. Scott long enough to lose the sense of his ungainly manner; never did any one speak so home to my heart, or make such an impression on my memory; and I am not singular in these particulars, for Burgh, who is once more my inmate, entirely sympathises with me. Oh! my dear friend, how vain and trifling do all the pursuits of ambition appear to me, when I place them in comparison with that crown of glory which fadeth not away, and even with the comfortable quietness of a conscience void of offence. May God enable us to taste more of this peace which passeth all understanding, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, and the sanctification of the Spirit. It is really sickening to me to return to the world after having for a while withdrawn from it, and to see all its vices and its follies: but I find it difficult, I ought rather to say impossible, to prevent my contracting some of its ways of thinking and judging. Pray for me, my dear friend, pray for me, that I may not only be "fruitful in



every good work," but "increasing also in the knowledge of God;" . . at that great day I may discover the beneficial effects of these intercessions at the throne of grace; and the service is one we busy men have a peculiar right to require of you retired ones. Like Moses on the mountain, you may strengthen the hands of us who are fighting on the plain, and thus forward, and, in the end, partake of the victory.

I was called over the way when I had written thus far; and have now barely time to fold my paper. Adieu—adieu!

Best remembrances to Mrs. C. and Co., and believe me ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Perry Mead, June 16th, 1791.

My dear Muncaster,

"If to her share some female errors fall,  
Look on her face, and you'll forget them all."

This was the effect of beauty; and that of friendship is somewhat similar. I was more than half angry with you, (I will tell you why some other time,) and had intended to scold; but no sooner do I set my face Muncasterwards than my features refuse their frown, and I can't help feeling and expressing a sensation of good-nature and complacency. My dear fellow, I hope you are well, and that you enjoy your family and your home, after having been so long separated from them.—And where, I hear you say, where is Perry Mead? It is situated in a country which, except in the article of water, comes not far behind Cumberland and Westmoreland themselves; close to Prior Park, and about three quarters of a mile from the Pump-room. There old Henry Thornton and I are lodged, and are leading a rational kind of life, and relishing not a little the quiet and retirement it allows us, after the bustle to which we have both been so long condemned. I have



heard nothing of the worthy\* who is the cause of your friendly solicitude, and I therefore begin to think that, by the prudent counsel of his advisers, he has laid aside his intentions: however I shall endeavour to place my peace of mind where nothing earthly can assail or molest it, and then, as Shakspeare says,

‘Come what come may.’

Henry Thornton will tell you that I offered to drive with him to Muncaster Hall, previously to our drenching with Bath Water. Whether or not I shall be able to look on you this recess I know not, but if I can spare the time, I assure you very sincerely it will give me very great pleasure to shake you by the hand in your own house, and roam over your wild hills. Independently of my regard for the inhabitants, I have an affection for the country of Westmoreland and Cumberland, which makes me always hail the sight of them, and quit them with reluctance. Adieu, Adieu. . . Read my books. . . I am over head and ears, plunged in letters to which I owe answers, and my eyes are bedusted and weak, but I could not defer writing to you. Kind remembrances to Lady Muncaster.

I am ever affectionately yours,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

THOMAS THOMPSON, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Hull, July 18th, 1791.

Sir,

The enclosed letter is from Mr. Joseph Benson, a preacher among the Methodists at Birmingham. I know Mr. Benson well, and I know him to be a pious man, a man of very considerable abilities, and of real learning. The fact undoubtedly is, that at this moment many thousands of the Methodists in different parts of the three kingdoms, are deliberating whether they shall become Dissenters, or continue in connection with the

\* Captain Kimber.

Church of England. I wish most sincerely that by some means they may be prevented from separating from the church; and as I know you are acquainted with some of the bishops, you may probably think it worth while to mention the matter to them. I believe the Methodists (I mean those only, at the head of whom was the late Rev. J. Wesley) are far more numerous than any sect of dissenters in England, and should they dissent, the opposition to the church and the present civil government will be greatly strengthened. I hope the bishops may think it necessary to do something, although I doubt whether the plan Mr. Benson proposes can be adopted. The Dissenters lose no opportunity to spread their sentiments, both religious and civil, and labour in every possible way to increase their numbers; and I wish the bishops may be roused to counteract them, and to see the danger which threatens the establishment.

I proposed to the Methodists here, which was unanimously agreed to, to print and send to all the Methodist societies in the nation, a letter declaring our determination to abide in connection with the Church of England, and recommending it to all the Methodists to do the same, and I hope it may have done good. But still there is some weight in what is alleged in answer to our letter . . . "At Hull, your ministers in the church are men of exemplary piety, but we have none such in our town or neighbourhood."

In the present portentous times, every good man will pray for peace, and be desirous of opposing, as he is able, the violent measures of dissatisfied and turbulent minds. I have the honour to remain, most sincerely, Sir,

Your much obliged  
and most obedient humble servant,

THOMAS THOMPSON.

WILLIAM HEY, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

1791.

My dear Sir,

The quotation which I sent you, respecting the authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews, was taken from the first epistle of Clement, which I suppose is one of the most authentic and valuable remains of antiquity. You are aware that chapter and verse could not then be quoted from the Bible, and that quotations by the ancients were not always made in the very words of the Scriptures. The whole passage from Clement seems to be clearly a quotation from the Epistle to the Hebrews, made in the usual way of quoting.

I had an opportunity the last summer of hearing Mr. G. preach in our parish church. His discourse was weighty and well delivered. I am inclined to think that the account, which I formerly sent you in a letter from Mr. Richardson of York, rather described what Mr. G.'s preaching was, than what it is now. He seems to me to be a person whom you might recommend to a church in a populous place, even in London. The purchase of the new church in Manchester is attended with so many difficulties, that it is very doubtful whether he will be able to execute the scheme.

The Methodists are in a state of violent contention amongst themselves. A large part of the preachers do not like that state of degradation in which they have hitherto been taught to act. They wish to rise to the full office of ministers. Mr. Wesley was weak enough to ordain some. These now ordain others. Many of the people wish to keep in the old way of attempting to do good to all without forming a distinct sect. But this is a scheme not so well suited to the pride of human nature. Many are very jacobinical in their notions; they are chiefly those who revolt from the old plan. What is man!

I am, dear Sir,  
your very affectionate friend,

WILLIAM HEY.\*

\* Mr. Hey was a distinguished surgeon, and himself a Methodist.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO RT. HON. W. PITT.

Yoxall Lodge, Nov. 1791.

My dear Pitt,

I shall really be greatly obliged to you if you will relieve me from a just cause of uneasiness, by doing something for Mr. John Hawarth, the poor man I have so often plagued you about, who sold out of the army in order to pay his father's debts. I know the impediments and difficulties that are even in your way in these cases, and therefore it is a rule with me never to give hopes, except the object appears actually almost in possession.

But in this instance, the poor fellow was so modest, and he had been dangling so long, that thinking, in consequence of what you told me, something would soon turn up, I could not help reviving him when he seemed ready to faint, and by so doing I have unintentionally kept him in suspense nine months more. I trust you will consider his past situation, and his tedious state of expectation, and remember also that I advised him to refuse a place of about £70 a year, as being too degrading for a gentleman; a man also who writes well, &c. Excuse my boring you. I assure you I have long been pushing back my own reflections, before I could be brought to it.

Another thing in Sir F.'s medium of connection—The enclosed I was forced to promise to forward to you, but I expressly guarded against any inferences that might be drawn from my so doing. I believe the author of the proposal is going to Sierra Leone.

And now, after having transacted my business with the *minister*, a word or two to the *man*—a character in which, if it is more pleasant to you to be addressed, it is, I assure you, no less pleasant to me to address you. I wish you may be passing your time half as salubriously and comfortably as I am at Gisborne's, where I am breathing good air, eating good mutton, keeping good hours, and enjoying the company of good friends. You have only two of the four at command, nor these always



in so pure a state as in Needwood Forest; your town mutton being apt to be woolly, and your town friends to be interested: however, I sincerely believe you are, through the goodness of Providence, better off in the latter particular, than has been the fate of ninety-nine ministers out of a hundred; and as for the former, the quantity you lay in may in some degree atone for the quality; and it is a sign that neither in friends nor mutton you have yet lost your taste. Indeed I shall reckon it a bad symptom of your moral or corporeal state, as the case may be, when your palate is so vitiated, that you cannot distinguish the true from the false flavour. All this is sad stuff, but you must allow us gentleman who live in forests to be a little figurative. I will only add, however, (that I may not quite exhaust your patience,) that I hope you will never cease to relish *me*, and do me the justice to believe the ingredients are good, though you may not altogether approve of the cooking.

Yours ever,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. Remember me to all friends. I hope you have no more gout, &c. If you will at any time give me a line, (though it be but a *mouthful*,) I shall be glad of it. You will think me be-Burked like yourself."

H. DUNCOMBE, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

1791.

Dear Wilberforce,

I thank you for your cheese and your Greek, though I confess the former is more to my palate. You make me a pretty compliment in saying you should not be so much off your guard if you were writing to Sheridan; as if a man who had been, when a boy, a year and a half head of Westminster, could be ignornat of Greek. You will say, perhaps, that it is some impeachment of my knowledge, that I have not looked into a Greek



book these five-and-twenty years. However, to punish you, and to show my skill, I shall only observe, that when you write to a person so well conversant in the language, you should accent it.

I am now at my shooting place, where I should have more diversion if I could see better, and the game were more plentiful.

I cannot yet give you much account of the music or the races, only of the first, that the undertakers were not losers, and the town full; of the latter, the wonder was to see that Mr. Fox was there and the steward\* absent. Certainly that latter circumstance was rather extraordinary.

Possibly your man from Markington may have been at Copgrove since I left it: I will endeavour not to offend his consequentiality.

Have you ever looked into a pamphlet, styled, "The Principles of Taxation considered?" If he is right, Mr. Pitt is not so, in deserting his plan of raising money by lowering the taxes. I like the book, and should wish to know the opinion entertained of it by persons of more judgment than myself. Pray read it. I rejoice that Pitt has got over his difficulties, though I fear not quite without disgrace: many think he is grown much too busy in foreign politics, and neglects to avail himself of the situation of France, which gives him an opportunity to detach us more from those wretched continental connections.

Mason has been spending a few days with me, and is well.

I am yours most truly,

H. D.

\* *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. i. p. 88.

REV. ISAAC MILNER TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.\*

Hull, December 3d, 1791.

My dear Sir,

In my last letter to you, I mentioned that I intended to write to Mr. Pitt, and to send a copy of the letter to the Bishop of Lincoln. It was with great reluctance that I brought myself to the step. I put it off from time to time, and it is now a very little time since I sent the account of my situation, which however at last was very full and explicit, and contained a complete history of my affairs, in three sheets. The Bishop of Lincoln answered me immediately, and espoused my cause with such a glow of friendship, as is never to be forgotten. In short, he said "he should never rest till he saw me settled in a comfortable income." Mr. P—— visited him lately at Buckden, and yesterday I received a most handsome and substantial letter from him, informing me that he had recommended me to His Majesty for the Deanery of Carlisle now vacant. I know neither the value of it, nor the requisite residence. I hope this last is not great. I am afraid journeys and ceremonies will be necessary by-and-by; and how I shall get through I know not, for at present I am not able to stir out of doors, much less to travel at this season of the year; and I fear a doctor's degree will be needful—at least proper. I have requested Mr. P—— to make all proper excuses for me he can. My health has suffered very severely by the bitterest affliction I ever experienced in my life. My brother was seized a fortnight ago with a fever, pleurisy, and spitting of blood; all this, added to his naturally asthmatical state, put his life for some days in the most imminent danger: I consider his situation still as critical, though the disease ceases to be called acute. I hope God will be gracious, and permit his continuance a little longer with us; but I verily believe his lungs are so much impaired, that he will never be equal to do

\* Docketed by Mr. Wilberforce. Milner Deanery. Brother's illness. Picture of his mind.

business again. The fact is, he is worn out in labouring in the best of causes: he never could be induced to spend a moment idle: I never saw his equal in that respect, and have long wished to see him relieved from a load of business, particularly the school teaching (you may remember I mentioned this to you, as well as my fears concerning him many years ago), and I have wished for it with a much greater earnestness than ever I did any thing for myself. My fear now is, that preaching at High Church\* will also be too much for him: but it is time enough to consider this if he recovers; at present he is confined to his chamber, and likely to continue there.

You know the terms my brother and I have lived on from infancy; you must also be aware of the great comfort he has been to me by my bedside, as an affectionate friend and faithful adviser, during my long illness. Judge, my dear friend, what I must have felt on the prospect of seeing him snatched away. My aged mother is so afflicted, as never to rest for the last two years for half an hour. There is a steady niece and a graceless nephew; my dear brother the support and comfort of the family. In short, I have neither eaten nor slept, and without the positive interference of God's all supporting hand, I must inevitably have sunk if the prospect had still darkened. I never felt thus on my own account. I applied to the throne of grace with all the steadiness and fervour I could muster, but I told my brother I saw plainly I had not learned to submit to the Divine will. "The thing is," said he, when at worst, "Isaac, you don't make God your *summum bonum*."

Oh, my dear friend, the *views* of religion, concerning which you and I have so often conversed, are the only ones that *can help in time of need*. May God of His infinite mercy grant that you and I may truly and practically become acquainted with them. We are for ever substituting something else in the room of them. How necessary is the rod of correction! It leads to self-

\* The Rev. Joseph Milner was lecturer at Trinity Church, commonly called High Church, Hull.

examination. I am very poorly and feeble, and must leave off. When do you go to London? You may perhaps be of some use to me, in instructing me to get through these ceremonies, in getting me excused from some of them, or in palliating matters.

I remember you always affectionately,  
J. M.

December 5th, Monday Morning.

My brother not quite so well this morning, but I hope not essentially worse.

I have this morning received a letter from the Bishop of Lincoln which rather distresses and flutters me: he says I ought to appear at the levee and drawing-room, which he believes is next Thursday se'nnight; now my fever is so very considerable, being increased by the causes mentioned in this letter, and the sharpness of the weather, that I cannot stir even out of doors without the utmost hazard. I have written to the Bishop of Lincoln to this effect, and I hope he will get me out of the embarrassment. Whenever it is that I come, unless you are in town to help me and to comfort me at your own house, I don't know how I shall ever get through such matters in this infirm state, particularly as I must acknowledge a natural awkwardness.

SAMUEL HOARE, ESQ.\* TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bath, February 20th, 1792.

My dear Friend,

I was fully aware that the insurrection of St. Domingo would create some alarm amongst our friends, and I am pleased to learn that every prudent measure will be adopted to obviate its effects; but I find another circumstance has rendered some of our best friends rather lukewarm, and especially those whom I am most earnest to bring forward,—I mean members of the Church of

\* Treasurer of the Committee for the Abolition of the Slave Trade.



England. They have adopted an idea, which I hope has no foundation, that the Dissenters wish for a revolution; and that the Abolition of the Slave Trade is somewhat connected with it. What has added to this apprehension is, some inquiries of Mr. Clarkson's whether there are many friends to the French Revolution, in letters which he addresses to different places. If I knew where he was, I would write to him on the subject; a moment's reflection must convince him that there is too much reason to fear that what may be only meant as his own private sentiments, will be construed into an opinion of our committee. I hope thou wilt lose no time in giving him a hint upon this subject, or our cause will be essentially injured.

Ever thine,  
SAMUEL HOARE.

THE REV. JOHN NEWTON TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Olney, July 9th, 1792.

My dearest Sir,

A letter from you should not have remained three or four days unanswered, could I have well helped it. But in the place where I lived so long, and where I can stay but a little while, almost every minute is engrossed. I now thank you for it. The thought of your being upon the point of calling here, made my mouth water. I need not say it would have given both me and Mr. Bean very great pleasure; however, I have sufficiently introduced you by your letter to Mr. Cowper, and he commissions me to say, that whenever it may suit you to call on him, he shall be extremely glad to see you, and hopes you will consider him as having long known you by character, and as one who greatly respects you. At present he is in good health: the cloud still hangs upon his mind, but I trust he is approximating to his former light and comfort, though by slow degrees. He is evidently better than when I saw him last in 1788. His old friend and companion, Mrs. Urwin, was lately affected by another paralytic stroke: she is again getting better,



but cannot walk without leading, nor be easily understood when she speaks. Should he outlive her, I should dread the consequence, but that I know (from my own experience) the Lord is all sufficient, and can support under the sharpest trials.

Glad should I be were I able to point out to you a proper person for New South Wales. The inquiry has been long and constantly upon my mind, but hitherto in vain :—

“ Dwells then in England charity so dear ?”

The zeal and self-denial necessary for this undertaking must be of a higher cast than ordinary,—must come from above; especially now the difficulties of Johnson’s situation are generally known. But the Lord who has given Johnson the missionary spirit, can stir up the hearts of others to succeed him.

Though I love Olney, I shall not be sorry to leave it. My feelings are excited here: almost every house I enter, and every person I see, reminds me of past times, and strengthens the remembrance of what I once had, and of what I have outlived. I carry this impression with me everywhere; but here local circumstances add to my sensibility; yet, blessed be the Lord, I am not uncomfortable; I have some feeling of the value of my many remaining mercies, and I can still relish them. I am satisfied that the Lord has done all things well.—*Sed hæret lateri arundo.*

I am learning to write short letters, but if my leisure was equal to my inclination, I should seldom give you a proof of my proficiency.

The good Lord guide, guard, and bless you, and make you a blessing more and more to the church and the nation. Amen.

I am, my dear Sir,

yours indeed,  
JOHN NEWTON

## W. PITT, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Burton, Pynsent, Aug. 8, 1792.

My dear Wilberforce,

I should like of all things to accept your invitation, but I must be at Windsor on Sunday, and I want to stay here till the last minute for the chance of seeing Eliot and my little niece, who may perhaps arrive from Cornwall before I set out. Since I received your letter, a circumstance has happened, which I believe upon the whole you will not be sorry to learn. Immediately upon Lord Guildford's death the King has written to me in the most gracious terms, to say that he cannot let the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports go to any one except myself. Under all the present circumstances, and in the manner in which the offer came, I have no hesitation in accepting it; and I believe you will think I have done right.

Yours ever,

W. PITT.

## HENRY DUNDAS, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Aug. 11th, 1792.

My dear Wilberforce,

I received your letter, and have given directions for the appointment of the clergyman\* you recommend. Perhaps, as you say, I do not think to the same extent as you do upon subjects of this nature, but I do not yield to any one in my opinion of the necessity of religious education, and continued instructions under regular institutions, if we hope to preserve any tie upon the actions of men in civil society. I should doubt, however, whether the settlers were so numerous as to require more than one clergyman at each place, but if you convince me that I am mistaken I am willing to retract, and do not regard any expense that may arise from it. As to the schoolmasters the case is more pressing, and I have no difficulty in trusting to your discretion, and the

\* As additional chaplain at Botany Bay.

purity of your intentions, in providing and recommending proper persons to me. It will give you pleasure to hear that the king, in the most handsome and gentlemanlike manner, has *compelled* Mr. Pitt to accept the appointment of Warden of the Cinque Ports, vacant by the death of poor Lord Guildford. I wish you much success from the waters of Bath, and remain, my dear Wilberforce,

Yours very sincerely,  
HENRY DUNDAS.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THOMAS BABINGTON, ESQ.

Bath, August 10th, 1792.

My dear Babington,

My friends are the only despots to whom I submit, and you command me to inform you immediately what people think of the Polish subscription. What people think I only know from the papers; I rather doubt of the wisdom of the measure; but it would require a sheet full to let you into the state of my mind on this head, so I must defer it, my eyes being indifferent: I will dismiss it, therefore, adding that the subscription having been resolved on, I thought it right to countenance it, and have put down my name for 100l.

I will by no means forget Macaulay;\* I think highly of his understanding; he appears to have a manly collected mind. In the utmost haste, my dear Babington,

I am ever yours,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. HANNAH MORE.

Near Bath, August 10, 1792.

My dear Madam,

I don't know any body to whom I can so properly apply myself as to yourself for information re-

\* Zachary Macaulay, Esq.

specting the widow of Mr. Charles Wesley; and to you I may disclose that the object of this inquiry is to ascertain whether her circumstances, character, &c. render her a proper subject for pecuniary relief. Unless she is something very bad indeed, the widow of Charles Wesley ought, if health, not luxury, required it, to feed on ortolans; nay, I would not confine her to one dish, but, in spite of S——'s remonstrances, let her have a haunch of venison daily into the bargain. Be kind enough not to make the matter more public than is quite unavoidable.

I have been half designing, every day since I have been here, to take up my pen, by way of shaking hands across the mountains. I don't know whether it will be in my power to avail myself of your kind invitation to Cowslip Green; but, without an untruth, if I can, it will give me real pleasure. Either in this letter, or, if there should not be a stamp in the house, by to-morrow's post, I shall transmit you a draft for 14*l.* on account of my dear sister. Still, according to Falstaff's arithmetic, and here he beats Cocker, she and I both owe you a million.

The Grants are coming here for a short time, and, I trust, will be my guests. I hope all goes on well with you, both in the house and out of it. May God prosper all your labours, and return them seven-fold into your own bosom. Did you ever read, or do you possess, Mr. Howe's "Treatise on Delighting in God?" If not, I will endeavour to get it and send it you: it is a most valuable present. Adieu, my dear Madam.

I am always affectionately  
and faithfully yours,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

Excuse haste: I write at full gallop, to make a little eyesight go as far as possible. Best remembrances to Miss P.; and the rest of your household are so evidently always to be understood that it seems an act of superfluity to express them. My sister is pretty well.



DR. CURRIE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Liverpool, April 23d, 1793.

Dear Sir,

If in the long letter which I wrote to you two days ago, there appears a good deal of unguarded warmth, the following circumstance will explain, though perhaps not justify it.

I was sitting in my study on the evening of Saturday reflecting on public affairs, when a young man called to drink coffee with me, a manufacturer of Stockport, near Manchester. After giving a picture of the general distress there, he informed me of his own situation in particular, and of the business which brought him to Liverpool.

He said that the house of which he is a partner employed about 15,000 hands, all of whom were now idle, or, as the phrase is, off work. That, previous to their being discharged, he and his partner had struggled on from one week to another, in hopes that the times would mend, and a demand, more or less, come for their goods. That, in this hope, they had gone on for the last three weeks, and not having a sufficient quantity of money to pay the people their full weekly wages, they had prevailed on them to accept about a third of the sum, as this, with economy, might suffice for subsistence. In procuring the money for this purpose, he told me that they had been reduced to extraordinary difficulties. Formerly they sold their goods in large quantity, but now they determined to supply the retailers themselves with a single piece, or even less; and, provided they paid them in specie, at almost any price. Accordingly, having goods in their warehouse that suited the home market, they fitted up a light cart and sent a young man with it, full of goods, to supply the retailers in every part of the country, and to bring home the specie every Saturday, whatever might be the loss. The expedient succeeded for about three weeks, but had now failed, and he was come to Liverpool to try if, by any possible means, he could raise a few



hundred guineas, to get over another week and keep his people alive. He told me that he and his partner had been constantly among them, and by entering into all their distresses, had prevailed on them to be extremely patient and reasonable. At their last meeting they had agreed to wait this young gentleman's return from Liverpool, and what money he was able to raise, they had consented should be laid out in oatmeal, which being boiled up with water, potatoes, and some of the coarser pieces of beef, should be shared out in fair proportion among them; and thus, in the cheapest manner, provide for their subsistence. As the house had many thousands owing them in Liverpool, though he knew there was no hope of any considerable debts being paid, he had no fear of not being able to procure the sum immediately wanted. He had been using every effort for two days, and had actually threatened to arrest two of our principal merchants on the exchange, but he had not been able to raise a single guinea. How he was to face the poor people he knew not; each of whom had from four to six weeks' wages due. But he could appeal to Heaven for the anxious exertions which he had made to relieve distress, which he could neither foresee nor prevent. As I looked at this young man, I perceived that his countenance seemed actually withered with care and sorrow. He is not a common character; he was the apprentice of Messrs. Bolton and Watt, and has an extraordinary degree of the most useful knowledge of every kind. He is modest, virtuous, and prudent; of astonishing application, and, in a word, one of the first young men I ever knew. These qualities recommended him to the notice of the manufacturers, among whom he exercised his profession of a mechanic and engineer. He had offers of partnership from the first houses there, and was actually taken into the house of Mr. Oldknow of Stockport, about a year ago; at that time, perhaps, the first establishment in Lancashire. Mr. Oldknow you must have heard of, as the original fabricator of muslin in this country, and a man of first-rate character. He has laid out a property of 50,000*l.* on building and

machinery alone. His partner (the young gentleman I spoke of) is named Ewart, the younger brother of Mr. Ewart, the late envoy at Berlin.

It is men such as these that are reduced to such extremities.

Mr. Ewart told me that a deputation was gone up to Mr. Pitt to represent the danger and distress of the country; but that such was the excessive bigotry of the church and king party now triumphant, and such the manner in which they had pledged themselves by addresses, that they were not instructed to make any remonstrances on the subject of the war.

Deeply impressed with these representations, I took up my pen the moment he left me, and sitting down to write at eleven at night, I poured out my thoughts in the letter you have, I presume, received; from which I did not rise till day-break. I had no time to copy or correct it, and therefore I trust in your extraordinary candour to overlook what may have appeared too vehement, and to excuse what may have seemed incorrect.

Since this time I have been thinking that it is my duty to appeal to the public, and to endeavour to point out to them the source of all their calamities. In doing this, it will be not less my interest than my inclination to continue unknown; and as it will be impossible for you not to discover me, I must rely for concealment on your honour. It is my intention to address myself in a letter to Mr. Pitt, and to go over more coolly a great part of the ground touched on in my letter to you, as well as a good deal additional.

In doing this I shall have difficulties to encounter, from the peculiar delicacy of many of the topics I shall have to discuss, and from the lamentable star-chamber oppression, produced by the folly and fanatic bigotry of the times. I must, by all means, endeavour to avoid the crown of martyrdom; but boldly I must speak, or continue silent.

I shall do nothing final in this project till I see how you receive my letter. I need not tell you with how

much true respect and affectionate regard I consider your character, or what influence any hint of yours would have on me.

I am, in great haste, your faithful servant.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Walmer Castle, October 3d, 1793.

My dear Muncaster,

I really was not conscious of having suffered you to remain so long without hearing from me ; I am sorry your anxious solicitude had been awakened by my silence. I thank God I have been as well as usual, saving my eyes, to which windy weather is always unfavourable ; but I have been shifting my quarters very frequently, which, though it is what I am pretty well used to, is a system to which custom by no means reconciles me. I arrived here about two hours ago, having been much pressed by Pitt to take possession of my quarters in his new habitation, and I never knew him better. The place is exactly suited to his taste—open downs for riding, high cliffs in the neighbourhood, and the castle itself all but in the sea. The house quite good enough for the purpose, and purely ventilated by every wind that blows. There are walls, which rival, and, I think, surpass in thickness, your famous one at Muncaster. 'Tis not known for a certainty whether the news respecting Dumourier are to be depended on. The revenue flourishes amazingly : the season has been unhealthy everywhere, and the rains almost incessant.

Shore,\* the newly-appointed Governor-general, is a most able, honourable man ; after having been twenty years in India, and for three or four of them in the Supreme Council, he returned with a fortune of about 25,000*l.*, and was with difficulty compelled to accept the splendid and lucrative post of Governor-general, which government so creditably to themselves absolutely forced on him.† He was living in retirement, not even keeping

\* Afterwards created Lord Teignmouth.

† Vide *Life of Wilberforce*.

a carriage, in Somersetshire, with a sweet wife and two children. I dined with him since at Pitt's in company with Dundas, and he was there the same simple, dignified man he had been in his country privacy. Adieu, adieu, my dear Muncaster; I could not have forgiven myself for delaying to take up my pen, though I do it in the utmost hurry. Kind remembrances to Lady Muncaster.

Yours ever,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO HIS SISTER.

Battersea Rise, October 18th, 1793.

My dear Sister,

My judgment is decidedly and strongly in favour of your taking an early dinner on Sunday, and going to church in the afternoon: I cannot think my mother will have any objection, but rather conceive she will be glad to be of your party. I don't say it lightly, I believe the contempt into which the sabbath has fallen, bids fair to accelerate the ruin both of church and state more than any other single circumstance whatever; and it is the bounden duty of every friend to our civil happiness no less than to our religious interests, to hold up its authority. Now, what a scandalous breach of it is the formally and systematically sitting down to dinner at the hour when public worship commences: what a host of servants, &c. are kept unavoidably away. Remember that all absenting from church begins, and is generally defended by saying, that one may read the service at home. There is no duty more solemnly and positively, and scarce any more frequently enjoined on us than that of *publicly honouring the name and service of God*. But I will not enter into a recital of my premises, which I have not leisure or eyesight to put down; my conclusion is clear, and that I hope will satisfy you. Only let me guard you against thinking there will be any great singularity in this: it is one of those things wherein the



duty is so obvious and binding, that in doing it there can be little exertion ; in leaving it undone, great blame.

I must lay down my pen, but I will say a word or two to that part of your letter wherein you express a doubt whether *we* are not too strict—to which, for myself, I say most sincerely, not half strict enough, at least in practice. But the matter may be brought to one short issue, so far as the Buxton and Battersea Rise systems are in question. Do the Buxtonians differ from us—I hate to speak of myself or of others ; I will put the sentiment in another shape. If I see people earnestly pursuing their future happiness, though I may think by a wrong road, they seem to me to deserve to be distinguished widely from those who are evidently giving themselves no concern about the matter. If an eternity of happiness or misery be dependent on the manner of spending this life, indifference is insanity. They who argue for a more relaxed system will hardly say they expect to be happier hereafter than if they were more strict ; all at least I have heard from them in general is, that they think they are strict enough to insure their safety. We do not act so in matters of temporal interest : a man would be thought a fool who, having the whole of Europe wherein to choose his residence, should plant himself within such a distance from a pest-house as he and some other unthinking people held sufficient for his safety, though the wiser and better of his friends told him he was in hourly danger of infection. I will not refer you to Doddridge, and Witherspoon, and Walker, but to Barrow, and Tillotson, and Taylor. St. Paul surely would have been thought far advanced on the Christian road, yet he says, “forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto the things that are before, I press towards the mark,” &c. May it please God, my dear sister, for Christ’s sake, to make you abound more and more in every good work. May your heart be comforted, your views cleared, your love strengthened, your faith confirmed. *Here* indeed, I believe (for I have the declaration from the best of men) we must ever groan, being burthened. Alas ! what cause have I



for groaning : but let us wait on God with continual prayers for the influence of His blessed Spirit, to render us daily fitter for a better world, where all sin, as well as sorrow, shall cease for ever.

Give my kindest remembrances to my dear mother. Venn speaks very affectionately of you. By the way, I will inclose a letter I have just received from him : it contains nothing, but it is as good as a morning call : return it. In extreme haste, your ever affectionate,

W. WILBERFORCE.

LORD STANHOPE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Chevening House, near Sevenoaks, Kent,  
December 5th, 1794.

Dear Mr. Wilberforce,

The personal regard I have for you, and the motives which induce me to write you this letter, will make you, I am sure, excuse the liberty I take.

The day of the meeting of parliament draws nigh ; the awful question of bloodshed and war, or of peace, will be agitated.

You, of course, must be to make up your mind on that momentous subject. *You* can do much ; it is therefore the more essential that you should do right.

However much I approve your general conduct, and admire some sublime parts of it, I must tell you, with all the sincerity of a friend, that your conduct on the above-mentioned subject is not what I expected from you. The man who votes to draw the sword to kill a brother, ought well to reflect whether he is quite certain that he is right and fully justified in so doing. But when a man votes for war, for the destruction of hundreds of thousands, for the laying waste of countries, and for all the moral evils attending on war, he heaps indeed a dreadful responsibility on his head. For it is not to you, dear citizen, that I need observe that this life is no other than a journey ; the being unavoidable is the necessary requisite in order to reconcile any war to a religious mind. You cannot say that it would not have

been possible to have avoided the present one, nor that it is not possible to put an end to it. That alone might decide the question.

But when you reflect on the situation of things, the events abroad, and those likely to happen, the change of the public mind at home, and the greater change that will probably take place as taxes and difficulties increase, you would do well to ask yourself this question, namely, "Whether by voting to continue the war, you may not finally bring this country into such a situation that peace may not be possible to be obtained." Possibly you may never have put to yourself that question.

But it is not sufficient for a man of your description not to vote for the projected carnage, but as an individual who has attracted the attention of the public, and as the representative of our largest county, it is your duty, both in parliament and in private, to do every thing in your power to prevent it. Perhaps in private you may have attempted it already; if so, and you have failed, it is the more incumbent on you to take your part decidedly in the House of Commons against a system, the obvious (and perhaps near) end of which is inextricable ruin.

Do you not remember when the House of Lords was told, and I believe the House of Commons also, that the French had but few arms, no clothes, no stock of ammunition, no real enthusiasm, no discipline in their armies, not provisions enough to prevent their starving, no means of cultivating their lands, no money, no credit, no resources; and when I stated, in every one of these respects, directly the reverse? I mention not this to recall to your recollection the odious and infamous reflections cast out against me for having dared to do my duty (though often single), and to speak the truth; but I do it to show you, from what is now notorious, that those who ought to have been well and officially informed, had no good information, or did not think proper to lay it before parliament. Suffer not therefore your honourable mind to be misled by pretended

official information. I have no doubt but that the resources of the French (if properly brought forth) are greater at this moment than when I stated them in the House to be greater than those of all their enemies combined. I have seen little, except ignorance and folly, on that subject.

On the contrary, this country, Great Britain, is vulnerable in so many ways, that the picture is horrid. By letter I will say nothing upon that subject. One instance I will however state, because it is information you cannot, as yet, receive from any other quarter; though in two or three months from the date of this letter the fact will be fully established, and you may then hear it from others. The thing I allude to is of peculiar importance.

The fact is this. I know (and in a few weeks shall prove), that ships of any size, and, for certain reasons the larger the better, may be navigated in any narrow or other sea without sails (though occasionally with), but so as to go without wind, and even directly against both wind and waves.

The consequences I draw are as follows:—

First, that all the principal reasons against the French having the ports of Ostend, &c. cease; inasmuch as a French fleet, composed of ships of the above-mentioned description, would come out at all times from Cherbourg, Dunkirk, &c. as well as from Ostend, &c. and appear in the same seas. The water, even at Dunkirk, will be amply deep enough for the purpose of having them there. The French having Ostend ought not therefore . . . under this new revolution in naval affairs, for it will be complete revolution . . . to be a bar to peace. Under the old nautical system, naval men might have reasoned differently upon that subject.

But the most important consequence which I draw from the stupendous fact mentioned at the top of this page is this, namely, that it will shortly, and very shortly, render all the existing navies of the world (I mean military navies) no better than lumber. For what can

ships do that are dependent upon wind and weather' against fleets wholly independent of either.

Therefore, the boasted superiority of the English navy is no more! We must have a new one.

The French and other nations will, for the same reason, have their new ones.

Now, do you seriously mean, or can you as an honest man (which you are), reconcile it to your conscience to place the very existence of your native land on this miserable foundation; namely, on the circumstance of which of the European nations can build new ships fastest. Recollect, I pray you, that the French, according to Dr. Price's calculations, independent of their new acquisitions, were upwards of thirty millions, and that England and Wales together do not contain five. Recollect, also, that they can bring, not only all shipwrights, but all house carpenters, smiths, &c. into requisition; and this, from their unparalleled enthusiasm in the cause in which they feel themselves engaged, will be cheerfully submitted to. This never has been done in England, and I am sure, in the present state of men's minds in that useful class, it cannot now be done.

Having now received the above information, what answer, nay what excuse can you make to your constituents, and to your country, should you not oppose the war; and, above all, what excuse can you make to that Being, infinitely high, who is the Creator of us all.

Reason, temper, foresight, and justice, can alone save us.

I send you inclosed a literal translation of the 118th and 119th Articles of the French constitution, in case you should not have seen it, as it completely refutes the nonsense we daily hear about their supposed intended interference in our internal concerns. It is not a simple decree, nor a mere law, but a fundamental article of the last constitution.

I shall be ever happy to hear you are well, though I neither wish nor expect you to reply to this; I shall be glad merely to know it is received. I am quite sure at



least you cannot answer my arguments. Possibly I may not have the pleasure of seeing you in the winter, as I shall be almost entirely at this place. Whilst I had a prospect of opening men's minds, I was anxious to attend the House. That time is past; events I believe either have or will open them shortly. Till then I shall be more happy at a distance from the disgusting scene, from which I wish my duty would allow me to be wholly absent.

Dear Sir, believe me, with great regard and truth,  
and, as an Englishman,

Your sincere and faithful fellow citizen,

STANHOPE.

REV. JOHN NEWTON TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

6 Coleman Street Buildings, Dec. 13th, 1794.

My dear Sir,

If I had more leisure for writing, and was sure that you had leisure and eyes for reading, I should perhaps be forced to apologize for troubling you too often. But while I am cautious of breaking in upon your time, and have more engagements of my own than I can properly attend to, I must rather intreat you not to judge of my respect and affection by the infrequency of my letters. The circumstances under which you were first pleased to make yourself known to me, and the confidence with which you then favoured me, have given you a peculiar place in my heart, independent of the regard I owe to your general character and situation. Though I usually feel something of a reserve with gentlemen in a public and superior line of life, who oblige me with their notice, I think there is hardly a person with whom I could more readily converse or correspond in a *tête-à-tête* way, or to whom I could more freely open my mind, than to you, were I to see you often and when you had a vacant hour.

I believe my last letter was dated in August, from Cowslip Green; I have just seen you since, but had no opportunity of expatiating on my delightful visit there.



I seemed like the Queen of Sheba at Solomon's court; what I saw and found exceeded all that I had heard, and all that I imagined. The Lord gave me much to be thankful for in many places. But as an interview with Miss More was the grand and leading object of my western tour, so the time I spent there still affords me the most pleasure and instruction upon a review.

I have been now more than three months in my old track—not I would hope idle, nor I would hope unuseful; but I have reason to confess, I am an unprofitable servant, especially when I compare myself with some others, and think of their sacrifices and their exertions. And my little will soon be less. The shadows of the evening are advancing upon me. The night cometh when no man can work. The good Lord help me to fill up the uncertain remnant of my time, as becomes my profession and my obligations. May he preserve my declining age from errors and stains, and keep me in a waiting posture, with my loins girded up and my lamp burning; that whenever, or however, the summons may come, I may be found ready. To these petitions I doubt not but you will kindly set your Amen.

Next Thursday will be the anniversary of the day, which terminated my late great trial. Then the desire of my eyes, my dearest earthly comfort, was removed; and when she died, I am willing to hope the world died with her. I ought, like the apostle, to have been crucified to the world by the cross of Christ; but, alas! it was very imperfectly the case.

I remember, when I owed it to your kindness that Mr. Pitt came out of the room to introduce me to the Privy Council,\* I thought that, supposing he had taken the occasion to ask what he could do for me, I was totally unprovided with an answer, unless I had thanked him, and said with the Shunamite, "I dwell amongst my own people." I wanted no one to speak for me, either to the king or to the archbishop. The Lord by placing me at St. Mary Woolnoth, had already raised me to

\* Mr. Newton had given evidence on the subject of the slave trade.

the summit of my wishes, so that no human influence could raise me higher. But, then, my dear Mrs. Newton was living, and my regard for her tied me down too closely to this life and the concerns of it by a thousand invisible strings. These are now broken. Now I seem to feel myself a stranger and a pilgrim indeed; and to see that, excepting a subserviency to the will and glory of God, and the good of mankind for His sake, there is nothing here for which I could wish to live another day. I cannot easily express how trivial all that the world calls most important, considered merely in a temporal view, appears to me. In reading Gulliver's Travels, I have sometimes smiled at the assumed consequence and weighty engagements of Hurgoes and Nardacs, who were but five or six inches high. But can the value of actions depend upon the size of the agents? or does the insignificance of conduct, attributed to such diminutive creatures, cease where it is exhibited by those who are measured, not by inches but by feet? Perhaps superior beings look upon us, as we should do upon the Liliputians; only, I suppose, their disdain may be mingled with compassion. For they consider us as immortals, and may feel both wonder and concern, when they see how trifling and thoughtless we are upon the brink of eternity. I suppose a maniac, who calls himself a king, weaves his straw into a crown, and insists upon it that his chains are made of gold, and the insignia of royalty, cannot be so pitiable an object to us, as a *Potemkin* is to angels.

The motto of Drury Lane play-house holds forth a lesson which I fear is seldom duly attended to by those who frequent it,—*Totus mundus agit histrionem*. Human life is a drama, in which every man has a part, higher or lower, to perform. But the far greater number think it a reality, and are not aware how fast the plot is hastening to the catastrophe, and how soon the curtain will fall. Then the external distinctions, upon which some prided themselves as if properly their own, will cease, and all the actors will stand upon a level, and be judged according to their works. The question will

not be, "What part we performed?" but "How we performed it?" The Lord grant that we may find mercy of the Lord in that day! It will be an awful day to many who were admired and envied while upon earth. Alas! for the rich, the gay, the wise (as they are called), the busy, and the mighty, who strutted for a while in borrowed plumes, lived without God in the world, regardless of their Maker, and instead of employing their talents in His service, perverted them for the ruin of themselves and their connections, as far as their influence could reach. Alas! If Mr. Garrick had really thought himself to be the individual Richard or Macbeth whom he sometimes personated, and had acted in common life, and when off the stage, as he did while he was still upon it, he would have been justly accounted mad. Such madness is in all our hearts; I congratulate you, my dear Sir, not upon your situation in the world, but that, while you are yet in it, the Lord has called you out of it. Your situation would be rather an object of condolence, if I only considered yourself and your present comforts. I often think, what would Mr. Wilberforce give for that command of time and choice of company and opportunities, which I am favoured with, if it were consistent with the post the Lord has, in His providence, assigned him? But you are not your own, nor do you wish to live for yourself.

Though some time must and will be reserved for secret waiting upon God by those who feel their need of such supplies as only he can communicate, yet much time of retirement is not essentially necessary when His service calls to active life. Religion is not confined to devotional exercises, but rather consists in doing all we are called and qualified to do, with a single eye to His glory and will, from a grateful sense of His love and mercy to us. This is the alchemy which turns every thing into gold, and stamps a value upon common actions. May he guide you by His counsel, cheer you with His presence, and strengthen your hands, and grant you the best desire of your heart!

When you have leisure to favour me with a line, I

shall be glad of your judgment respecting the associations rapidly forming to stop the consumption of West Indian produce. If you and your friends who have exerted yourselves so nobly for the abolition of the slave trade, and are likewise known friends to government, were to recommend such a measure, I should readily adopt it. At present, and especially as a minister, I do not enforce it; I think it premature, and rather beginning, as we say, at the wrong end. In these noisy times I would be cautious of taking any steps which might even remotely seem to imply dissatisfaction with government. I judge of your sentiments by those of Mr. Thornton and Sir Charles Middleton. But I wish, if you please, to have the sanction of your own name.

If Mr. Thornton and Mr. Grant should be with you when my letter comes, I beg to present my best respects to them. I have had, which seldom happens, a forenoon without interruption. Had it been otherwise, I should have put your patience to a shorter trial.

I am, my dear Sir,

Your obedient, and affectionate,  
and obliged servant,

JOHN NEWTON.

JOHN JAY, ESQ.\* TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

January 28th, 1795.

Dear Sir,

Accept my thanks for your obliging letter of yesterday, and for the copies of the Sierra Leone Report which accompanied it.

I have read it with pleasure, and perceive that more important and interesting consequences may result from that settlement than I had apprehended. You must derive great satisfaction from being thus employed in works of humanity and beneficence—they who promote the happiness of others, advance their own.

I am, dear Sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.

\* American Ambassador.



## ZACHARY MACAULAY TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

King's Arms Yard, November 21st, 1795.

Dear Sir,

I was last night at a debating society in Wych Street, Drury Lane, where the question proposed was, "Whether a king of England would not violate his coronation oath, by giving sanction to a convention bill." Before the debate began, I amused myself with listening to the conversation passing around me. One between two men and a woman, all decently dressed, was to the following effect:—

*First Man.* "I'll tell you how I think, I think as how if the king passes this bill, he declares war on the people."

*Woman.* "Ay, and he violates the bill of rights."

*Second Man.* "Ay, that he does, and his coronation oath; he does not know his duty; he ought to go to school again, but I hope the people will teach him." "But I think," said the first man, "as how I can prove, as clear as the sun, that if he passes this bill, he declares war on the Supreme Being. Did not Mr. Erskine tell us as how the voice of the people was the voice of God?"

"True," said the second man, "Vox populi, vox Dei."

*First Man.* "They have used us like swine, and now we begin to grunt, they mean to hang us up like dogs; but we will grunt, and may be make them grunt too."

*Woman.* "Did you not see how Mr. Erskine told us we might resist? Ay, and so we will too."

*First Man.* "Now, there's that monster, Wilberforce; what a fellow he is, and he pretends to be a good man too. Why, he's for the bill. Hanging is too good for such a fellow. As for the others, they don't pretend to be good, and it is not so much in them to favour the bill; but he tells you he's religious!"

*Second Man.* "I heard Mr. Jones declare in the Forum, as how he would meet the society at Copenhagen House, come what might. They could not, he said, take up every body."

*First Man.* "All Pitt wants is to hang Thelwall and Jones: they had better take care, for people will be got



to swear more stoutly than before ; and if they are taken up, I would not give a fig for their lives."

*Second Man.* "There again. Now I hate all spies and informers ; they ought all to be swept away from the earth. Now there was that fellow that swore to the Pop-gun Plot in the playhouse ; why he's bad enough to swear to any thing. He taught what he called a religious school in the city, but I suppose it was some such religion as Mr. Wilberforce's."

The chair being at length taken by a very shabby looking fellow, the question was read, and gentlemen were asked to give their opinions. A man, who looked like a methodist, spoke very confusedly in favour of the bills. He said some good things, however, and concluded by saying, "that if these bills met, as he believed they did, the sentiments of a majority of the householders of this country, the king would violate his coronation oath in not sanctioning them." A man, whom I took to be a weaver, then spoke on the other side of the question. He did not at all discuss the provisions of the bills, or enter upon their merits ; but he asserted unconditionally that the king, in passing these bills, would violate the bill of rights, consequently his coronation oath, and of course that the people would be entirely loosed from their allegiance, and would be justifiable in taking arms to oppose their being enforced. Magistrates were necessarily blockheads, and of course improper persons to be entrusted with the powers this bill gave them.

He was replied to by the man who spoke first, who went over what he had said before. He was followed by a violent democrat, who asserted in round terms, that King George the Third, in passing these bills, would be guilty of an act of the most atrocious perjury, and would therefore deserve the punishment of it ; the people ought to rise to crush a faction which was bent on their slavery. Pitt was the head of this faction, and as for the king, he seemed to be little more than one of Pitt's adherents. If it were possible for him to imagine that Englishmen would not resist

the enforcing the law which these bills introduced, he would pray and desire with his whole heart that they might be doomed to eternal chains. He used many similar expressions. The meeting was adjourned.

I remain, with respect, dear Sir,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

Z. MACAULAY.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MR. O'HARA.

June 27, 1795.

Your letter touches a string in my heart which sounds in unison with your declaration, that you look back on the interval which has elapsed since our being fellow-collegians with a sort of melancholy sensibility. But I find myself constrained to add that the prospect, closed as it is with the view of the time I passed at Cambridge, presents to my eye a still deeper tinge. It is a gloomy and humiliating retrospect to one who, like myself, can behold only a long period of what our master poet has so emphatically styled "shapeless idleness;" the most valuable years of life wasted, and opportunities lost, which can never be recovered. Your too tender allowance for my youth represents me to you in a less unfavourable point of view; but this, alas, is the true one, and it is scarce too strong to say, that I seem to myself to have awakened about nine or ten years ago from a dream, to have recovered, as it were, the use of my reason after a delirium. In fact till then I wanted first principles; those principles at least which alone deserve the character of wisdom, or bear the impress of truth. Emulation, and a desire of distinction, were my governing motives; and ardent after the applause of my fellow-creatures, I quite forgot that I was an accountable being; that I was hereafter to appear at the bar of God; that if Christianity were not a fable, it was infinitely important to study its precepts, and when known to obey them; that there was at least such a probability of its not

being a fable, as to render it in the highest degree incumbent on me to examine into its authenticity diligently, anxiously, and without prejudice. I know but too well that I am not now what I ought to be; yet I trust I can say, "*Non sum qualis eram*," and I hope, through the help of that gracious Being who has promised to assist our weak endeavours, to become more worthy of the name of Christian; more living above the hopes and fears, the vicissitudes and evils of this world; more active in the discharge of the various duties of that state in which the providence of God has placed me, and more desirous of fulfilling his will and possessing his favour. I find it difficult to break off.

Yours truly,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

REV. RICHARD CECIL TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Little James Street, March 12, 1796.

Dear Sir,

. I thank you very kindly for your remarks. I have often lamented that I could not find a friend who would tell me very plainly what he observed and felt while sitting in the church where I minister. And (though it is an odd thing to say) I have actually thought that if I could find some poor man of a sound and informed mind, I would employ him to sit and hear me, and pay him an extra half-crown for every capital blunder he pointed out. As you are not poor, I do not send the half-crown with this letter; but as you have the sound and informed mind, pray afford me the help without the money.

I must indeed confess, that I have been told before now of my speaking too low, and sometimes think I could do more for my hearers in preaching two sermons in the day than in preaching three, but at any rate I will do my utmost to be heard. I have also spoken two or three times to my worthy assistant, Mr. P——,

about what you mention, and was very glad to have your letter as fresh ground for speaking again.

With much gratitude for this and all other favours,

I remain, dear Sir,

Your obliged humble servant,

RICHARD CECIL.

HERCULES ROSS, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Your own Parlour, Saturday noon, April 9, 1796.

Having had occasion to come as far as Doncaster to see some friends, I could not resist throwing myself into one of the coaches, two evenings ago, and coming this length. I argued that it was but 160 miles, and I should have the happiness of seeing my most esteemed friend. Behold now I have reached his door, he is unwell and confined to his chamber. May the Almighty be pleased soon to restore him to health, and long to preserve his valuable life.

I think of returning this evening for Edinburgh; I left Mrs. Ross there. We are paying some visits previous to our embarking upon a long promised visit to our parent, Mr. Parish, at Hamburgh, who proposes sending a neutral ship for us to Rossie, about the beginning of June. Permit me to request that you will suffer one of your domestics to write a few lines, addressed to Drysdale's Hotel, Edinburgh, signifying how you are, a few days hence.

I had proceeded far in answering your last invaluable letter, but, alas! temper failed, and I relinquished the attempt; but Mrs. Ross will do it. Adieu, my dear friend.

I am most truly yours,

H. Ross.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO A FRIEND.

Palace Yard, April 25, 1796.

My dear —,

If the news of my illness should have reached you,



I am persuaded it will give you pleasure to receive from myself the assurance of my recovery. I am still, however, to consider myself only convalescent, and to abstain from whatever bears the semblance of business. Moderation in the use of my pen is of course enjoined; and having a good deal of indispensable writing, you would not hear from me just now if it were not for some intelligence respecting your situation which I have very lately received, and which will not suffer me to delay for a moment communicating to you the result of my consideration. I must be short; but between us what need of preamble?

You are persuaded, I trust, of the friendly regard I entertain for you, which I flatter myself is not greater than what you feel for me. I am rich—you are poor. I am your nearest relation who is unincumbered. Now surely, under these circumstances, it cannot but be right for you to allow me annually to appropriate to your use as much as, added to your other resources, will set you at ease as to money matters; and I assure you, it would give me real pleasure to supply you with it. You ought not to feel any embarrassment on the occasion: you do little justice to my friendship for you, if you do not rate it far beyond any pecuniary help. If our circumstances were mutually changed, you, I am sure, would gladly contribute to my accommodation; and I can say with truth, that I should apply to you without reluctance, and receive your assistance without a blush. I will contrive to make my payments so as to keep the transaction secret, and they shall begin from the 25th of March last. I have been revolving a little where you could live most comfortably. Of that we may talk hereafter; but I own I am inclined to give the preference to —, as I do not think the difference of expense ought to outweigh all other considerations. Now, my dear —, may God bless and preserve you. I wish it were in my power as easily to give you tranquillity and comfort of mind, as to remove your pecuniary embarrassments. Be assured at all times of the pleasure it will afford me to promote in every way your hap-



piness; and believe me, with every friendly wish, in great haste,

Affectionately and faithfully yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO HIS MOTHER.

Wakefield, June 16, 1796.

My dearest Mother,

I am about to do that which, on the first view, might almost seem a breach of filial respect; but on serious reflection, as in the presence of God, I am clear that I am right, and therefore I persevere. That cannot be disrespectful which is the result of affection; and under an idea of honouring, to abstain from that which might benefit a parent, must be deemed at least a weakness, to which one ought not in duty to give way. My eyes are but very indifferent, and my stock of leisure not large, I must therefore write more hastily, and measure my phrases less scrupulously than I should wish to do in such a case; but writing to you, my dearest mother, I am not afraid of being misconstrued.

Your perceptions are naturally quick, your discernment clear, and your temper warm. In such a temperament of qualities, when the infirmities of age begin to press and gall, it is requisite that there be a double guard against both the reality and the appearance of fretfulness. The latter may exist without the former; and is it breaking in upon the respect I ought to bear you, to say it has often given me much pain, during the last time or two of my being with you, to witness in you somewhat of this appearance, for I really believe it is appearance rather than reality? Indeed, it is this belief which much encourages me to mention the matter to you, because, knowing you to be really grateful to God for the blessings you enjoy, I am hurt at your affording to those around you any cause for suspecting the contrary. I have said enough—I hope not too much. God knoweth that at this moment my earnest

supplications are offered up to Heaven for your happiness; and trusting as I do, that through the mercies of God in Christ you will obtain an entrance into eternal glory, I am solicitous, so far as I am able, to brighten your crown, and to watch against the encroachment of any rust or blemish which might insensibly grow upon it, at a season when its proprietor cannot, from bodily infirmity, keep it so sedulously as in the full vigour of the faculties. May it please God to bless my honest endeavour, and may I have reason hereafter to know it has been of use. I regret, my dearest mother, that from local circumstances I am able so little to contribute to your comfort, so little to assist in cheering the langour and enlivening the tedium of your advancing years: but though situated as you are, I could not do this without a dereliction of those public duties, to the discharge of which Providence has destined me, yet my prayers are often poured out for you; and I implore that gracious Being, "who knoweth whereof we are made," to support and comfort you. May He enable you to bear with cheerfulness whatever trials it shall please His all-wise Providence to lay upon you; and may He at length, by an easy dismissal, receive you into that blessed world, where there is no more sickness, nor any more pain, but all is unmixed joy, and love, and peace for ever.

Farewell, my dearest mother. I trust I have never more than now proved myself your dutiful, as well as your affectionate son,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S.—It may not be amiss to assure you, that I have written this altogether of my own motion, and that no human being has any idea of my so doing, or intending so to do.

Don't trouble yourself to write an answer; but as I shall be anxious to be assured that this letter reaches you in safety, be kind enough to let me have one single line by any other pen, to say you have received it. Direct to me at Halifax.

THE REV. JOHN NEWTON TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Paul's Cray, Kent, July 21, 1796.

My very dear Sir,

Necessity obliged me to run beyond my usual time, but I have long had my present two or three days' retreat in prospect, and purposed, if I could attain it, to make my payment. You were very good to write first, and without taking notice of my tardiness.

You say true, my dear sir: I seem to myself to stand upon a cliff, from whence I contemplate with compassion and thankfulness the many whom I see tossed about upon the tempestuous sea of public life. But you have no claim to my pity, though you have a just right to my prayers, and a frequent place in them, because I believe you are the Lord's servant, and are in the post which He has assigned you; and though it appears to me more arduous, and requiring more self-denial than my own, I know that He who has called you to it can afford you strength according to your day, and I trust He will, for He is faithful to His promise.

I answered for you in my own mind, that if, after taking the proper steps to secure your continuance in parliament, you had been excluded, it would not have greatly grieved you. You would have looked to a higher hand, and considered it as a providential intimation that the Lord had no farther occasion for you there. And in this view, I think, you would have received your *quietus* with thankfulness. But I hope it is a token for good that He has not yet dismissed you.

Some of His people may be emphatically said not to live to themselves. May it not be said of you? Would you not be glad to have more command of your time, and more choice of your company, than your situation will admit? You meet with many things which weary and disgust you, which you would avoid in a more private life. But then they are inseparably connected with your path of duty; and though you cannot do all the good you wish for, some good is done, and some

evil is probably prevented by your influence and that of a few gentlemen in the House of Commons like-minded with yourself. It costs you something—many hours, which you could employ more to your own personal satisfaction, and exposes you to many impertinences from which you would gladly be exempted; but if, upon the whole, you are thereby instrumental in promoting the cause of God and the public good, you will have no reason to regret that you had not so much leisure for more retired exercises as some of us are favoured with. Nor is it possible at present to calculate all the advantages that may result from your having a seat in the House at such a time as this. The example, and even the presence, of a consistent character, may have a powerful, though unobserved effect upon others. You are not only a representative for Yorkshire, you have the far greater honour of being a representative for the Lord, in a place where many know Him not, and an opportunity of showing them what are the genuine fruits of that religion which you are known to profess.

Though you have not, as yet, fully succeeded in your persevering endeavours to abolish the slave trade, the business is still in train; and since you took it in hand, the condition of the slaves, in our islands, has undoubtedly been already meliorated. I believe likewise that it is wholly owing to you that Johnson and Marsden are now in New Holland; and I trust that, notwithstanding all discouragements, the seed sown and sowing there will yet spring up to the glory of God. These instances, to which others with which I am not acquainted, might, I suppose, be added, are proofs that you have not laboured in vain.

It is true that you live in the midst of difficulties and snares, and you need a double guard of watchfulness and prayer. But since you know both your need of help, and where to look for it, I may say to you as Darius to Daniel, "Thy God whom thou servest continually is able to preserve and deliver you." Daniel, likewise, was a public man, and in critical circum-



stances ; but he trusted in the Lord, was faithful in his department, and therefore, though he had enemies, they could not prevail against him.

Indeed the great point for our comfort in life is to have a well-grounded persuasion that we are, where, all things considered, we ought to be. Then it is no great matter whether we are in public or in private life, in a city or a village, in a palace or a cottage. The promise, " My grace is sufficient for thee," is necessary to support us in the smoothest scenes, and is equally able to support us in the most difficult. Happy the man who has a deep impression of our Lord's words, " Without Me you can do nothing."

Through mercy I continue well, and hitherto competent for my public work ; but I feel I grow older. I am within a fortnight of entering my seventy-second year. I think I have lived long enough for myself. The world, indeed, appears a poor thing to me now ; yet I have no reason to be weary of living, for I am surrounded with comforts and mercies. I can think of nothing worth wishing for to make me more happy in temporals ; but, alas ! I dwell in Mesech, and Mesech dwells in me. What with the evils I feel within, and the sin and misery which I see on every side without, I should faint, were it not that I know whom I have believed, and am satisfied that all is in His hands, and that He does and will do all things well,

May the Lord bless you, my dear sir ; may he be your sun and shield, and fill you with all joy and peace in believing,

I am your very affectionate, and much obliged,

JOHN NEWTON



GRANVILLE SHARP, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.\*

Garden Court, Temple, August 4, 1796.

Dear Sir,

While your friend remains in power I have one favour to solicit. I ask it for the sake of his own credit, as well as for the credit of his partners in administration, that they may no longer lie under the suspicion of being accessory to the oppression of a worthy man whose intentions were always disinterested and patriotic; I mean the Marquis de la Fayette, who, with his amiable family (I believe) are still most cruelly and unjustifiably detained in an Austrian or Hungarian bastille! My application to you in favour of this unhappy gentleman has, I trust, some grounds of propriety.

He was a leading member of the late society in France for the abolition of the slave trade; and I received likewise several very sensible and humane letters from himself, as an individual, on that subject, to which, I believe, he was very sincerely attached; and on that ground alone I earnestly beg the immediate exertion of your best interest with your friend while he continues in power, that an immediate application may be made for the release of the unfortunate Marquis and his oppressed family, whilst administration continue to have any remains of influence with the Austrian court, lest a separate peace between that power and France should render it impossible hereafter for Mr. Pitt to serve him.

The Marquis was really a royalist,—I mean a promoter of a duly limited monarchy, according to the free constitution of England, to which he and many other worthy Frenchmen in 1789 were most enthusiastically attached; so that it will be no derogation from the proper character of an English minister to apply strenuously for the poor Marquis's release. I remain, with great esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged humble servant,

GRANVILLE SHARP.

\* Docketed "Granville Sharp about La Fayette."

JEREMY BENTHAM, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Queen's Square Place, September 1, 1796.

My worthy Friend,

Extraordinary crises call for extraordinary measures, and may even throw a vest of gravity on what might otherwise seem ridiculous. Read the extract underneath; it may serve as a text for the practical discourse that follows it.

"Paris, 26th Thermidor (13th August), executive directory. Public audience of the 20th Thermidor (7th August). (Extract from the) Speech of Mr. Vincent Spinola, envoy extraordinary from the Republic of Genoa to that of France. 'My fellow-citizens have cast their eyes upon me: they have thought that he who has so often had assurances of confidence from the representatives and generals of the French Republic will have, citizens directors, some title to yours.'

"Reply of the president of the executive directory to Mr. Spinola. Concluding passage;—'The executive directory sees with satisfaction that the Genoese government has chosen for its representative with the French Republic a citizen who has acquired the reputation of being a friend to humanity, and to the liberty of French republicans.'"

Above, you see the occasional cause of an idea, which, however whimsical, and whether practicable or no, proves at least to have something like a foundation in precedent and experience. We must, sooner or later, have done fighting with Pandæmonium, and upon that occasion may find it advisable to look out for some sort of a candle to hold to the princes of the devils. Waving devils and candles, might it not contribute to smooth the approach to peace, if in the steps taken, whatever they may be, towards that end, use were made in some shape or other of some person, the choice of whom might, upon the strength of some conspicuous and incontestable attribute, stamped, as it were, upon his forehead, appear intended purposely as a compliment to them, and indicative of a disposition to honour and flatter them? Now,

then, my good friend, where is that sort of person, the choice of whom, for such a purpose, could be more likely to prove flattering to them than that of one of the chosen few, on whom they took it in their heads to confer that sublimest of all earthly honours,—that highest of all degrees in the climax of equality,—the title of French citizen? Looking over the list, among the seventeen of which it is composed, I observe six British; and among these six, none but yourself and your humble servant, that are not reputed republicans, unless it be your journeyman labourer in the vineyard of the slave trade, Mr. Clarkson, of whose sentiments in constitutional matters I am not apprised: what say you, then, to an expedition to Paris upon occasion, properly dubbed and armed,—not à la J——n,\* to devour the country, but à la Wilberforce, to give peace to it? The knight of Yorkshire at any rate: his fellow-citizen, if so please his knightship in quality of his humble squire, to keep his armour in order, and brush his shoes?

As to yourself, every man, since Thales gave him the hint, “knows himself,” at least as much of himself as a man likes to know; and therefore of yourself, speaking to yourself, I need say nothing.

As to your obscure and humble would-be follower, who has the prophet-like property of being still more unknown in his own country than in the next; in addition to the grand article above spoken of, the following are the titles that might help to recommend him to an embrace of condescending fraternity from the five kings.

1. A sketch of the Panopticon plan, printed by order of their second assembly, with a letter of mine before it; a sort of certificate of civism, such as no other non-Frenchman that I know of could display.

2. An invitation in form, given me here by Talleyrand in the name of the Directory of the then department of Paris, during the Duc de la Rochefoucault's presidentship, to go and set up Panopticons of different

\* Lord Hawkesbury (Jenkinson.)

sorts there. Witnesses at least, and for aught I know, the minute, are still in existence.

3. In Brissot's, as well as Mirabeau's periodicals, flaming eulogiums of some extracts translated from my papers on the judicial establishment, which I sent to the first assembly, (before they had taken to plundering, &c., and which the Abbé Sieyes (proverbial there for jealousy and self-sufficiency) prevented, in spite of the endeavours of the Duc de la Rochefoucault, Brissot, and others (appearing in some measure from some letters of theirs in my possession)—prevented, I say, from being translated by authority and printed.

4. An acquaintance made in London with Brissot, in the days of his obscurity and innocence, followed by marks of esteem and confidence on his part, evidenced by a bundle of letters of his, beginning 25th January, 1783, ending 6th November, 1790, relics of that proto-martyr, which happen to remain unburnt, and which a noble\* Scotch worshipper of his is welcome, at any time, to kiss without a fee.

Brissot used his endeavours afterwards to get me returned to the convention, and, but for the instances of a friend of mine (who happening to be there at the time feared its drawing me into a scrape), was likely, as that friend afterwards told me, to have got my name added to those of Paine and Priestley:—the whole business as perfectly strange to me till months afterwards, as to the pope of Rome. Don't let it mortify you too much, but we three (two P.'s and a B.) were made *grande*es of the first class, set down *in petto* for Solons, fenced off from the *gens-en-sous-ordre* by a semicolon, an *impayable* semicolon! We being thus entrenched and enthroned, after us they let in a parcel of "corn consumers," the Wilberforces, the Washingtons, *fortemque Gyam, fortemque Cloanthum*.

Some friends of mine (*à propos* of Brissot) used to be attacking me in those early days for having any thing to say to so poor a creature. My defence used to be that

\* Lord Lauderdale.



he seemed a quiet, good-humoured sort of man, and was of use to me in procuring books and literary information.

5. The business your excellency would have to do would consist, principally, I suppose, in chaffering about colonies. As to this matter, while vanity would join with duty in engaging us both to strain every nerve in the endeavour to retain whatever you were intrusted to haggle for, the printed opinions of your humble servant would give him that sort of advantage in point of argument, and afford him such a certificate of sincerity in the use of it as can hardly be to be found elsewhere. What the minister says to you now is no more than what the man said to you at the beginning: we are an infatuated people; you a wise one:—give us what we want—you see it will be no loss to you! In this point of view, how much fitter a man with such opinions, than a man who could never open his lips without impressing people with the importance of the very objects which it was his business to prevail upon them to give up!

True it is, that were they to see an analysis I have by me of their favourite Declaration of Rights, there is not, perhaps, the being upon earth that would be less welcome to them than I could ever hope to be; but there it lies, with so many other papers that would be equally obnoxious to them, very quietly upon my shelf; and though no man can be more averse to simulation even in the best cause, yet no man, according to my conception, is bound to suppress any ideas that he happens to have in common with those whom his business is to conciliate, still less to fling at their heads any that he happens to entertain in opposition to theirs, because no man is bound to get his own head broke to no use. With these reserves, what renders every thing of simulation the less necessary in the case in question is, a general principle of human nature, a certain propensity we have as often as we observe a man's ideas meeting our own in a prominent point or two, to jump to the like conclusion with regard to all manner of other points; but of all people the most remarkable for their precipitancy in this way are surely the French. I met with a



Frenchman once whom nothing would persuade that Priestley, whom he had been talking with, was not an atheist as well as himself, because they happened to agree on some points relative to matter and free will. Priestley foamed with rage at the imputation, but the Frenchman was not to be so taken in. Priestley, on his part, was even with him, for he would no more believe the Frenchman's atheism than the Frenchman his theism. If you and I, their adopted brethren, with our recorded merits, were to go over and shake hands with them, and call them fellow-citizens, we might say what we would for the first month at least:—they would no more believe it possible for us “to honour the king” who sent us, than the man believed it possible for Priestley “to fear God.”

Were it their lot to send to us on a similar errand, who the messenger were, so long as there were nothing about him particularly offensive, would here, I am apt to think, be regarded as a matter of very considerable indifference; but in their instance, the examples of the vent they give in this way to their humour, good or bad, are as abundant as they are notorious. This Spinola, and I believe many others on the one side, and on the other, Carletti the Sardish envoy, whom they shut the door against the other day, the pope's nuncio, and the Sardinian minister, whom they sent packing with others who might be found, I dare say in plenty, if there were any use in it.

Suppose them, on the other hand, applied to in the ordinary way; suppose them in that case, refusing to treat with your great friend; suppose their insolence to rise to such a pitch (and to what pitch may not French insolence rise) would not his option be rather an awkward one?—to deprive the country of one of two things, the benefit of his services, or the blessings of peace! Would it not be a satisfaction to you, before the dilemma came upon him, to step in and save him from it? However slight the danger on one hand, however uncertain the efficacy of the preventive on the other, yet the expedient being so simple and so cheap, might it not be worth while to take the chance of it? Has not there

been an instance? Tuscany, was it not? (the events of this time succeed one another with such rapidity, that without a particular call for attention the impression vanishes.) Has there not been an instance of their actually forcing a sovereign to discard his principal minister? There is some difference, indeed, between that country, whatever it may have been, and this country, it is true; and thence comes the hope that in our instance they might be satisfied with that sort of complimentary submission proposed; (though an instance of mere common civility, and no more than what good breeding would join with prudence in dictating between man and man;) whereas in the other case, nothing short of dismissal could be accepted.

There is the invasion, too, and though at the long run I should not much expect that many who came over on that errand would get back again, unless by a cartel; yet, make the best of it, the final destruction on one side would be but an indifferent compensation for the intervening confusion on the other.

On an occasion like this, it is impossible for me to avoid thinking of an excellent friend of mine, an acquaintance of yours, to boot a veteran in the trade, who, in these hard times, adds great dignity to great worth, without a morsel of bread. I need scarce say how absurd it would be for me to name myself in company with him, were it not for the above-mentioned accidental peculiarities, but for which I should as soon have thought of offering myself for the command of an army as for any such purpose as the present. On the supposition of your declining the business, I would black his shoes with as much fidelity as yours, and would black them literally, rather than see him a sufferer by my means.

Your great friend, were this to reach his eye or his ear, might smile; but there are times in which, for a chance how faint so ever of being of use, a man may be excused for exposing himself to a smile; and, (if I may address myself to you, my good friend, as to a confessor,) when looking round me I observe those who, taken from a situation which was once my own, without any such

marked though accidental recommendations, have given satisfaction in this very line, I fear not to say to myself *Ed io anche*,—I, too, am capable of going on an errand. Should the general idea happen to meet your approbation, make whatever you think best of it, nor let your friendship conceive, that because it is from me that the suggestion happens to have come, there is any necessity of my having any thing more to do with it; on the other hand, should I appear capable of being made useful, make use of me in any way without reserve. Believe me, with the truest respect and affection,

Yours ever,

JEREMY BENTHAM.

P. S.—In the papers of this very day I read the following articles:

*Times*, September 1st. “From the Paris papers, August 25–27. Italy, August 6.: the French, it is said, require the exclusion of the Chevalier Acton from the ministry of the court of Naples.”

*Herald*, September 1st. “From the Paris papers August 25–27. Rome, July 27.: concluding sentence. ‘The Chevalier Azzara was chosen by Mr. Mist, and Barbary was appointed to represent the pope. But in this first day the conferences were broken up, and M. Azzara declared he would not treat with Barbary, whom he looked upon as one of the principal causes of the ruin of the state.’”

LORD ST. HELENS TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bristol, Hot Wells, September 6, 1796.

My dear Sir,

Our friend Bentham has sent me a copy of the very lively and entertaining, but most eccentric, epistle that he addressed to you on the 1st instant. I differ from him, *toto cælo*, as to his main arguments; being persuaded, first, that to endeavour to obtain peace by any unworthy flattery towards the French, or compliance

with their silly pretensions, would be the least likely method of obtaining that object; and, secondly, that the said object, however highly desirable in itself, would, if obtained by such means, be not worth the having. I entirely subscribe to honest Fluellen's opinion, that "because the enemy is an ass and a fool, and a prating coxcomb, it is neither fitting nor seemly that we should also be asses and fools, and prating coxcombs;" but I am at the same time thoroughly convinced, that when your adverse party is a bully and a braggadocio, your only way of dealing is to stand up to him firmly and vigorously without abating one iota of your dignity and just pretensions, in ceasing to combat his absurdities and extravagance with the offensive and defensive weapons of truth and reason. Ergo, it seems to me that our friend would be the less recommendable for the office of negotiator with France from the circumstance he mentions of his own fraternity with Paine and Priestley, though quoad J. B. he would in many respects be very well qualified for it. As to yourself, my dear sir, the case is widely different; so much so, indeed, that were it necessary or consistent with decorum, I am certain that I could easily demonstrate that there is no person in the king's dominions who would be, in every respect, so well qualified as yourself for the office in question, should you be inclined to undertake it.

I now come to the main purpose of my letter, which is to beg and entreat that in case you should be inclined (which I can hardly suppose) to show our friend's letter to Mr. Pitt, you will at least pause a little before you make that communication, as it appears to me that it could answer no useful purpose, and might very possibly injure our friend in Mr. Pitt's good opinion, as he does not know him as well as we do. I hope to have the pleasure of finding you in town about a fortnight hence, and in the mean time must entreat that you will not give yourself the trouble of answering this, as I am upon the ramble, and shall very possibly have left Bristol before an answer could reach me.



I have not yet written to B. but probably shall tomorrow.

Most entirely yours, my dear Sir,  
ST. HELENS.

THOMAS MAUDE, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Wensley, December 13, 1796.

Sir,

Let me desire you to correct a mistake in my "Instructions to the Cape of Good Hope," if you have not parted with the paper—For Volney, read Monsieur le Vaillant.

In return I shall give you a character received last week from Dover, which may make you smile, even in this gloomy weather.

The succession of lay fellowships in Trinity Hall has not yet reached me, though I am above a doctor's standing; and so tenacious are the great men in possession, that there is not a lay fellow of our college, Trinity Hall, who is not in the receipt of upwards of 1000*l.* per annum, and many of 5000*l.* or 6000*l.* One instance I will give you in this neighbourhood, a very curious character, Lord —— who lives near Hythe, about eight miles hence. This man has been Fellow of Trinity Hall above fifty years, and is now upwards of eighty: he lives in affluence, and has his public days once a week. He suffers his beard to grow in imitation of the philosophers of old. He bathes in the sea all winter through, and instead of drying himself with towels in the common way, he rolls himself on the beach till he becomes dry, and then walks up to his house (which is not far from the shore) in a state of nature. He has frightened many people who have accidentally seen him and taken him for a marine monster or merman. *Ex hoc uno disce omnes.* Yet there are people who will tell you we have no abuses. It is certainly an Augean stable; and if a Hercules could be found to cleanse it



properly without injuring the fabric, he might truly be said to deserve well of his country.

We have had here the Tunisian ambassador: he admired much our apparatus for firing red-hot shot, asked many pertinent questions, and seemed to be a sensible man. Lord Downe and myself were the only persons that could converse with him, through the mediatorial language of Italian. He made us both a present of snuff, highly scented with the otto of roses, that would even have regaled *Omiáh*, though (as he answered a lady who offered him a pinch out of her box) his nose was not hungry. I am, Sir,

Your much obliged and devoted

T. MAUDE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO Z. MACAULAY, ESQ.

(Governor of Sierra Leone.)

London, January 6, 1797.

My dear Sir,

We have an expression, "an Iliad in a nutshell." To say that this might be properly affirmed of my letter would seem rather an extraordinary speech, but yet there is a sense in which it would not be without a meaning. And when a friend, who is too much occupied to write long epistles, who is also debarred from the free use of his pen by a constitutional infirmity, sends to one who loves him, in a distant country, a few hasty lines as an assurance of kind regard and affectionate remembrance, the sheet has a value which is not to be estimated by the bulk of its contents, or the distinct meaning of every separate proposition contained in them. To such a value this letter is entitled; and it will not go beyond the truth in assuring you of my often thinking of you with affectionate interest and cordial approbation. There is something very striking to my mind in the idea of the many various ways in which we are employed on earth, and of the identity of views and motives which may animate all the different

modifications of employment. You are doubtless in the line which Providence has pointed out to you,—a most satisfactory consideration this, of which I am persuaded you feel the comfort.

News, public or private, you will hear from others, therefore I will break in upon you no longer, but hastily subscribe myself, with hearty affection,

Your faithful friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE REV. JOHN VENN.

Bath, January 18, 1797.

My dear Friend,

I have been kept silent more by not knowing well what reply to return to your question than by any other cause. It is really a thing greatly to be regretted that persons of solid piety should not feel it their duty to divest themselves of any peculiarities of manner, and to acquire some powers of conciliation in an age like this, when there is a prejudice against the evangelical doctrines themselves, and therefore the greater reason for taking all honest means for avoiding offences. I am not quite clear that any of the four you mention would do. It strikes me that —— would be better than any of them: he is a gentleman in his manners; he also preaches written sermons. Indeed B——, I apprehend, would not object to doing this. If any one occurs to me better, I will let you know.

I should be glad to see your venerable father, and to receive his blessing before he is taken hence. There is something infinitely animating in the idea of an aged Christian being about to take his departure, when one can look forward for him with the confident hope one may indulge in your father's case. It is an impressive sight to behold a vessel entering the port after a voyage round the world; but how faint an image is this of that abundant entrance into the haven of everlasting security and rest, which is ministered to such a servant of God.

Oh, my dear friend, this is a turbulent sea in which we are tossing. May it please God, and I trust of His infinite mercy it will please Him, to carry us safely through for his Son's sake. What a meeting will it be, if, as I would hope, it will take place, when we shall meet with a consciousness of parting no more FOR EVER. Oh that that word for ever were more present with me, staring me in the face with its gigantic characters, and shaming to nothing (their proper size) whatever of earthly things should dare to dispute with it the claim of my attention! But, as poor Bates used to say, "we are all in such hurries." Yet a man is not to sit with his arm up in his elbow-chair musing in barren speculation. That is pleasant enough, but it is not religion. I have been scribbling (by candlelight) when I ought to have been undressing for bed; I must now lay down my pen. Farewell, my dear sir. I think of you with the warmest affection, and with solid pleasure. You are right, I verily believe, you are right, where you differ from many whom I esteem, but of whom I think that they bow with too implicit submission to —. But I shall be beginning again; so good night. I beg my kind remembrance to Mrs. V. and your father, and am,

Ever yours,  
W. W.

REV. JOHN NEWTON TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

April 21, 1797.

My dear Sir,

I know not where you are, but I suppose a letter sent to Palace Yard will soon find you.

I deferred thanking you for your very kind and very acceptable present, till I could say I had read it. Indeed, I have not properly *read* it yet, but I have *devoured* it. My first perusal, though without missing a word, has been hasty. I hope to peruse it more leisurely. But from this cursory survey, I trust I am warranted to tell you, that I have already found it profitable, for

instruction, for correction, and for reproof; and therefore I must wait upon you with an intercalary letter.

I think you know by this time, that I do not much deal in ceremonials and compliments. But I should stifle the feelings of my heart, were I wholly to suppress mentioning the satisfaction, the pleasure, the joy, your publication has given me. To God be all the glory. The best men are but instruments of his pleasure, and have no sufficiency as of themselves even to think aright. We can remember the time, when you could not have written this book, and when I would not have read it, if it had been put into my hands. The difference between what we are, and what we once were, and what many still are, is all of grace. According to His mercy He has saved us.

I had written thus far, when the postman brought your letter. I am glad I made a beginning before it came. It is true, my dear sir, I am pretty much engaged *in my way*; but could you think it possible, that I should be content with dipping in a book of yours? Had you written upon any other subject, my love and respect for you would have made me impatient to read. On the other hand, had your book come without a name, without any circumstance that could lead me to guess at the author, it would have engrossed my attention. You compel me, Sir, to say, that I deem it the most valuable and important publication of the present age that I have seen: especially as it is *yours*. There are many persons both in church and state, who, from their situations, are quite inaccessible to us little folks: what we preach they do not hear, what we write they will not read. But your book must and will be read; and where else can they meet with a representation of real religion, so complete, so totus teres et rotundus, so forcible and yet so gentle, so candid and yet so explicit? The Lord has enabled you to honour Him, and now He has highly honoured you.

But chiefly my heart congratulates you on the goodness of the Lord who has so guided you by his wisdom, and supported you by his power, that after moving for



more than twelve years amidst the embarrassments, snares, and trials incident to your public life, you can publish such a book, without any just apprehension of that retort, *Medice sana te ipsum*. You have long been a spectacle. Many have watched for your halting, and it is probable that many have attempted to throw you down. But the Lord has been with you. What a striking appeal have you made to the consciences of your numerous acquaintances and connections, so that if they will not yield to your arguments, they must, however unwillingly, be convinced by your example, of the salutary tendency of the doctrines of the Gospel! That the Lord has raised you up to bear such a testimony, at a time like this, to His truth, revives and strengthens a hope, which at some seasons I have found it difficult to maintain, that deserving as we are of the severest national calamities, He will not yet give us up.

I cannot depend upon our fleets and armies (we have just now a signal and unexpected proof how little they are to be depended on). But I trust there are a number, though few if compared with the bulk of the nation, who are like-minded with yourself; whose eyes affect their hearts; who are standing in the breach, in the spirit of humiliation and prayer, pleading for mercy, and mourning not only over the sins of others but their own. The Lord has left us a remnant, and I trust not a vere small one collectively, and they have interest with thy Great Master of the storm. They have access to a throne of grace, and if He gives them a heart to pray, He will hear them. There were but a few of these in Isaiah's time, but they were sufficient to defeat Sennacherib, not by swords and spears, but upon their knees. These, in my view, are the chariots and horses of our Israel. Mighty things have been done by prayer; and the Lord's hand is not shortened nor His ear heavy.

At present, clouds and darkness are about His throne; His footsteps amid the sea, untraceable by us. But we are sure that His designs and His methods of accomplishing them are worthy of Himself. His friends and



His enemies are equally His servants though in different respects. A great man will not employ his children to sweep his stables. Methinks all Europe, or what we call Christendom, is a great Augean stable. God has sent His scavengers into it; and when they have performed the dirty work according to His will, He will let them know that while they thought they were only pleasing themselves, they were doing what He appointed to be done.

But though we cannot trace Him, we have good warrant to trust Him. All these commotions shall issue in the advancement of His glory, the spread of His Gospel, and the welfare of His body the church. For these great points the earth was at first formed, and is still preserved. And when these are fully accomplished, the united concerns of the rest of mankind will not prevail for its preservation for a single day. When the great drama is completed, the theatre will be destroyed.

In the mean time, He says it shall be well with the righteous. Blessed are they who know His name and put their trust in Him—He will be their sun and their shield, their guide and guard to the last step! He will either avert the evil they fear, or (which upon the whole, amounts to the same thing) He will make their strength according to their day. As to this world, they may say with him of old, and much more justly, *Omnia mea mecum porto*. For their treasure is in Heaven, and they, as strangers and pilgrims, are passing on, and will soon be at home, where no storms blow, where the voice of war shall be heard no more. There sin and sorrow, its “*individua comes*,” shall not follow them. They shall flee away, and joy and gladness shall come forth to meet them, and introduce them to Him, who will wipe all tears from their eyes. Then they shall weep no more.

By the time you return to business your book will be well known. I rejoice to think what additional weight it will give to all you say or do, as in other places, so especially in the House of Commons. Oh! that a friend of mine there might be stimulated by it to support an

equal consistence of character! The Lord bless you,  
my dear Sir. I have only room to subscribe myself

Your most affectionate and obliged

JOHN NEWTON.

REV. JOHN NEWTON TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

June 3, 1797.

My dear Sir,

How long have I waited and wished for such intelligence, as, I am told, appeared in the papers yesterday! When dear Mr. Thornton married, I took the liberty to express my hope that you would one day follow his example. For though I was sensible that your line of public service afforded constant employment for your time and thoughts, I believed there was a something, yea many things, in domestic life, which would add to your personal comfort, enlarge the sphere of your sympathies, and give you diversified opportunities of exhibiting the Christian character to the praise of Him, whose you are, and whom you serve.

I have lived to see my desire, in this matter, accomplished, and to congratulate you on the event. When the Lord's hour came, which, like the time of tide, must be waited for, His Providence directed you, I doubt not, to the right person. A union has now taken place. My part and pleasure will be to pray (and I trust I shall not pray in vain), that it may be mutually happy to yourselves, and a blessing to your connections; that it may not only be for the term of this frail life, but may subsist and flourish in a better climate, when the transient considerations upon which it was first founded shall be but like the remembrance of a dream when we awake.

It is needless to say that I am a stranger to Mrs. Wilberforce; but, I believe, she will readily admit me into the number of her ideal friends, if you will please to inform her of two points; though, I believe, neither you nor I can fully express them. I mean your great

kindness to me, and the great respect, regard, and affection which I bear to you; which commenced with the hour I first saw you in my vestry, and has been ever since upon the increase.

When I published "Letters to a Wife," I presented a copy to you; I could do no less. I knew you would accept it favourably as a token of my regard, but I expected no more. I supposed that if you opened it and read a page in any part, you would think it too romantic to deserve your farther notice. But you are now in the same school. I have sometimes thought that Solomon could scarcely be better qualified, by experience, to treat on the subject of human grandeur, than I am to write or speak of the marriage state. It is true, at my first setting out, and I fear to the end of our journey, there was, on my side, a degree of quixotism and idolatry, for which I have cause to be ashamed and humbled all my days; yet the Lord was merciful, and He taught me, by degrees, that nothing short of Himself could satisfy the vast capacity for good with which He had formed my soul.

If two persons are happily united in affection, in faith, and hope, as helpmeets in promoting the same final cause, and fellow-heirs of eternal life, their chief danger, I was going to say, is lest they should be too happy. But the Lord, who loves them, will take care to prevent this danger. By the wise and gracious appointment of Him, who considers our frame and our situation, there is a *per contra* side. A new set of feelings is awakened, new and unexpected, at least, untried, sources of inquietude and anxieties are opened; and the pains, perhaps, are fully proportioned to the pleasures. The tender heart finds enough to bear while single, in such a world as this, but when doubled in wedlock, and multiplied in children, it stands as a broader mark for the arrows which we can neither foresee nor avoid. And we are liable to suffer, not only in ourselves, but perhaps more keenly in the persons of those whom we love. But we may say with the Greeks, *nisi periissem, periissem*. He who loves us gives us a thousand daily proofs

that he delights in our prosperity, so far as we can safely bear it; and if we are in heaviness there is a need-be for it. These painful dispensations are necessary to keep us from sleeping upon the enchanted ground, and to make us not only say, but feel, that this is not, cannot be, our rest, for it is polluted. Here our roses grow upon thorns. Vanity, if not vexation of spirit, is entwined with all our earthly comforts.

Though not in an elevated situation, I think I have known as much of this world's good as it is capable of affording, especially in wedded life. Yet how few of my most favoured days could I wish, or be willing, to live over again? and I am sure I would not retrace the two last years of our connection for the empire of the whole earth. But the Lord is good. And though I have often foolishly thought that if the desire of my eyes should be taken from me, the sun would shine to me in vain, I believe, taking all things together, I have been more comfortable since she left me than I was before.

I cannot easily write upon this subject without becoming an egotist. I know you will bear with me. You have long encouraged me to use entire freedom, and released me from forms. My heart is full. I said in my Anniversary for 95 (which therefore was my last), *The Lord has healed the wound He made*. He has so indeed: I can say from my heart he has done all things well. But the scar remains. She is still almost continually present to my waking thoughts. Indeed, I cherish the dear remembrance, because I find it powerfully excites the exercise of gratitude and humiliation, when I consider how long she was spared to me, and how justly I deserved to lose her every day from the first.

When we have completed our appointed number of services and trials, according to the will of Him who bought us with His blood, we hope to be admitted to the marriage supper of the Lamb. O what a transition will that be! Then no clouds will obscure our sun;



then our sun will go down no more. And may we not indulge the thought—that we shall there have some peculiar interest in those whom we most loved, with whom we took sweet counsel, walked with to the house of God in company, and were instrumental in promoting each other's salvation? Shall we not then look back together upon the way by which the Lord led us through this wilderness, and by a clearer light than we have now, be able to review and recount the Ebenezers we set up to His praise, for all our escapes, supports, and deliverances? Then, if not before, I believe we shall add our sharpest trials to the list of our greatest mercies.

I hope, in good time, you will favour the public with a smaller and cheaper edition of your valuable, your invaluable, book. It is certainly best calculated (where I pray the Lord to make it very useful) for the higher classes in life; and, perhaps, is above the level of the very lowest. But there are multitudes in the middle ranks who might profit by the perusal, and yet may be discouraged from purchasing it at the present price. I hear the second edition is gone. I could wish you had printed 5000 at first—but it is a foolish wish, because it comes too late. No family should be without it.

As my quarter-day is near at hand, I may tender this as prompt payment, a little before the time; and you will please to give me credit for it, if I should not be able to write so soon.

Horrida tempestas cælum contraxit—but the Lord reigns. I trust we are like Noah in the ark. I think his voyage was not very *pleasant*, but he had the comfort of knowing that he was *safe*.

Please to give my respects to Mrs. Wilberforce. She now has a share in all that I owe you, especially in my prayers, that the Lord may bless you in yourselves, in each other, in all your concerns, and be your sun and shield, your guide, counsellor, and comforter through life. I may hope to go home before you, as I am far in

my seventy-second year. But yet a little while, and I trust we shall meet before the throne.

Believe me to be

Your most affectionate and obliged

JOHN NEWTON.

REV. JOHN NEWTON TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Reading, June 7, 1797.

My very dear Sir,

I can converse with you as often as I please by your late publication, which I have now read through with increasing satisfaction a third time. I mean not to praise you, but I must and will praise the Lord for your book, which I cannot doubt will be accompanied by a Divine blessing, and productive of happy effects. I hope it will be useful to me, and of course to those who attend on my ministry. I have been near fifty years in the Lord's school: during this space He has graciously taught me many things of which I was once no less ignorant than the beasts of the field. He has made me a debtor to many ministers, and to many books, but still I had something to learn from your book. You have not only confirmed but enlarged my views of several important points. One thing strikes me much, and excites my praise to the Lord on your behalf, that a gentleman in your line of life, harassed with a multiplicity of business and surrounded on all sides with snares, could venture to publish such a book, without fearing a retort either from the many friends or the many enemies amongst whom you have moved so many years. The power of the Lord in your favour seems to be little less remarkable than in the three young men who lived unhurt and unsinged in the midst of the fire, or of Daniel who sat in peace in the den when surrounded by lions. It plainly shows that His grace is all-sufficient to keep us in any situation which His providence appoints us.

I believe I must in future alter the tone of my quar-

terly\* payments, if I continue to make them. Though I have long been well satisfied that the Lord had in mercy set you apart for Himself, yet I thought an occasional hint of the dangers to which you were exposed might not be unseasonable. But now I shall be glad to look to you (at least to your book) for cautions against the evils that beset my own path, and for considerations to strengthen my motives for running the uncertain remainder of my race with alacrity. May the wisdom and power of the Most High guide, strengthen, and protect you.

I am, with the most sincere regard,

My dear Sir,

Your much obliged and affectionate

JOHN NEWTON.

THE DEAN OF CARLISLE, DR. MILNER, TO  
W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Hull, June 7, 1797.

My dear Sir,

I arrived here on Saturday last; which day was as much like a winter's day as could be, both in boisterous wind and cold rain.—I am a little relieved to-day, and hope to tend to Carlisle shortly. I have not yet stirred out; so have not seen Mrs. W——. It is most true that all the time I am writing about my own affairs, I am thinking of yours.

Remember me always affectionately to you *better half*, and explain to her, at proper times, the oddities of your old but sincere friend; otherwise, I fear, her favourable disposition towards me will weaken and not strengthen. My earnest prayer is, that this change in both your situations may be for mutual good.

Nothing can be more awful than public affairs.—If I were Pitt, or the K——, I would come down to the House, and, first, beseech unanimity; secondly, desire

\* Mr. Newton was accustomed to write to him four times at least every year.

that all hands would unite in saving the nation, *i. e.* getting out of the scrape before they thought of reforming it; thirdly, I would solemnly promise to take the sense of the nation at large on the subject of reform, as soon as all was safe. For I say this, if the bulk of property be for reform, then reform cannot be stopped. I don't think they are or will be; therefore I would number the whole nation, which might easily be done; and thus I would find out whether the bulk of property, or of housekeepers, &c. &c. really desired a reform, or were content with the present constitution. I am convinced that such a proceeding would either set the question at rest, or would put it on a different footing from the present: *e. g.* if it turned out that property were against reform, then it would nearly be reduced to this—Shall we have an universal suffrage? Let the real sense of the nation be found, and the lists printed; and let the different ways of conceiving this matter be stated, and let the people be classed. Objection—There will be a great number of hypocrites, who will pretend a moderate reform, and *mean* more: Answer—I think the question might be so stated as to show what was the number of such sort of people: In short, I think it would be a great thing to find out the real sense of the people, if you were a year or two about it. Then I further think, that if government, in that period, would employ good hands to state, *ad populum*, briefly the dangers of too popular a reform, they would strengthen themselves most amazingly.

I believe the above is the true way to get out of all difficulties—to disconcert rascals, and to unite honest men.

Oh, how I wish they would take such a step!

I also wish that a very respectable commission would go down to these sailors.

Yours, in fear and anxiety,  
J. MILNER.



TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Saturday, June 24, 1797.

Good Sir,

Your benevolence, I trust, will pardon the intrusion of a stranger, impatient to express his heartfelt gratitude for the high obligations which he (perhaps with thousands besides) owes you, nor will a short detail of circumstances be altogether uninteresting to a man who has so eminently proved himself the friend of the human race. I have had, as it is called, a liberal education, and am of the profession of the law. Being of a temper naturally contemplative, when a child I received my first impressions of religion with a warmth and zeal not very common, I believe, to those of my age. My young mind, heated by the awfulness of the subject, hurried me into all the extravagance of devotion, whilst an inflamed imagination prepared me to receive, if an occasion had offered, the chains and prejudices of the absurdest superstition. In this state I continued till the approach of that season, when a physical change informs us that we have new difficulties to overcome, and more powerful temptations to withstand. I did, I fear, as many have done under similar circumstances—I wished to compromise, as I thought, with a severe master, and whilst I yielded to the gratification of a strong passion, promised implicit obedience in all other points; but I found when I had once passed the Rubicon, that it was impossible to continue stationary; languor and indifference were soon succeeded by a total neglect of all religious duties; and the attendance required by academic discipline was complied with reluctantly, when it could not be evaded by artifice. Though I broke the law, I did not as yet venture to question its authority; and the fear and trembling which accompanied my transgressions still continued to alloy the free indulgence of my passions.

In this state you will easily believe me a willing convert to the sophistry of any libertine unbeliever who, removing my scruples, by persuading me that I was in

error, should teach me to sin with more satisfaction. An opportunity was not long wanting. I swallowed the new accommodating doctrine with avidity; and though my fears as well as my reason, under the influence of demonstration, forbade me to follow some of the most daring of my companions into the dark and comfortless regions of atheism, yet I learned enough to philosophize away morality, by framing the attributes of the Deity in subservience to my inclinations; arguing that, because He created me with passions, to indulge them could not be a crime. A vague and floating principle of honour, joined to this flexible system of philosophy, usurped the place of sound morals: I praised virtue in theory, but for the practice I consulted my convenience or rather inclination. I was charmed by the wit of Voltaire, idolized the sagacity and profound reasoning of Hume, and admired the eloquence and deep research of Gibbon. Cursed vanity! which could tempt men to the abuse of such talents, by undermining the hope, the comfort, and the happiness of their fellow-creatures, whilst they affected to be their best friends,—and for what mighty purpose? Truly, that one should show his talent for ribaldry and sarcasm, the other his skill in sophistry and in perplexing the mind on subjects wisely set above the reach of the human understanding, and the third display his skill in the use of Gallic raillery, at the expense of an order of men that seems never to have offended him.

I beg pardon in thus deviating from the purpose of my letter, which was to express my gratitude to you for that dawn of peace which now beams on my mind, and permits me to anticipate my return to virtue and to wisdom, with a joy and thankfulness, which you, most excellent sir, can better conceive than I express. Sir, I shall be brief; it is now not many days since I first looked into your book, and I do confess that I was induced to read it, more from curiosity to know what you could say on a subject on which I had made up my mind, than from a desire of giving up principles which,

though they could not bestow happiness, must, I thought, be retained, because, as I imagined, they were adopted on the grounds of reason. But truth, divine truth, startled me: I felt its force; I felt, by sad experience, that my philosophical system could not give happiness, because it did not produce virtue. I felt, but for the timely reflections caused by your book, philosophy would have permitted me to commit a crime which might have embittered the remainder of my life. Well was it for me that it came to my assistance before I abused hospitality, seduced innocence, and planted a thorn in the breast of the most virtuous of wives and best of mothers—for I am a married man! Spare me any further detail, and accept again my heartfelt gratitude: it is your due, for you have preserved me. Though it may be grateful to your philanthropic mind to hear that you have materially served a fellow-creature, who the individual is can little import you to know; he shall content himself in obscurity and at a distance to admire your excellent qualities, to pray for your happiness, and the full accomplishment of your virtuous undertakings.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Sunday, 1797.

My dear Muncaster,

You would perhaps guess in part the object of my visit last night, that it was to see our old friend Duncombe, who, I had understood you, was to arrive in town yesterday. But yet only in part would you have guessed right: for, I am sorry to say, my visit was not merely for the purpose of shaking you both by the hand, but that he might not learn suddenly, or from the newspapers, a piece of intelligence with which I had just become acquainted, and which I knew would distress him. This is no other than the death of Mason, occasioned by what seemed a slight accident,—hitting his shin against the step of a carriage. Nothing was thought of it till the Monday, it having happened on

the Friday preceding, and on Wednesday it carried him off. Life, how uncertain! and how justly is it said that in the midst of it we are in death! My telling you will answer the desired purpose.

Though I don't see you, my dear Muncaster, on a Sunday, I believe I may truly say I never pass one over without thinking of you. May God bless you, is the hearty wish and frequent prayer of

Your affectionate and faithful friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

Come and dine here to-morrow, at half after three; and if Duncombe be come, ask him if he will; only I shall be forced, you know, to leave him soon.

CHARLES GRANT, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Battersea Rise, September 23, 1797.

Dear Sir,

When, in laying aside for a little a task that is yet unfinished, in order to answer your letter, I was about to indulge myself in all those feelings of friendship, affection, and pleasure, which it excites, a mournful recollection soon damped my thoughts. It is due to your sorrow and to my own, and highly to the dear friend who is gone (I need not say that I mean Mr. Eliot), to condole with you upon the loss of him. It will touch you, I am sure, almost as nearly as you will judge any event of that nature ought. You suffer at many points. For my own part, though I should, perhaps, never have used the freedom of calling him a friend whilst he lived, yet, now that he is gone, I feel for him with all the sentiments of true friendship: and I feel for the public and the church. There being but few such characters, his removal is both a misfortune and a dark omen. He, however, I trust, has made a happy exchange. He experiences, we may hope, the ineffable joy of entering into a safe and a blissful eternity. You have one grateful reflection, I believe, in the midst



of your distress, that you contributed to make him think betimes (and of what importance now!) of the things of his peace. My affectionate sorrows follow him.

It is but just that when we grieve for what we lose, we should also be sensible of the mercies that remain to us. I have reason to be perfectly astonished at my own situation in this respect, and most cordially do I feel your happiness—that great accession of it of which you are so good as to tell me. May God continue it, and sanctify it, and, if he sees it good, even increase it! You could not have given me a more gratifying proof of friendship, than in this kind communication; and if I am not forward to use all the formal terms with you which belong to the language of friendship, as to which I have had various reluctances, from a just sense of disparity from my own poverty in requisite qualities, and perhaps from somewhat raised ideas of such a relation, yet you may believe that in whatever concerns things interesting to you, even in an inferior degree, I feel myself readily and naturally affected, as if they in some sort appertained to myself. I wish Mrs. W. the utmost success in her happy projects of utility. Such pursuits seem to offer at this time a peculiar relish, when the world affords little comfort, except in things connected with a better state. The rising generation is certainly the great subject to work upon, and our best hope, if we may venture to look forward to any distant day. I am lost in viewing this last political revolution; but fears predominate,—fears that this evil of war, with an enemy whom the righteous God has let loose to be the scourge of guilty nations, is for many days.

I have been late in beginning this letter, which my watch, lying before me, already admonishes me to close; and I should not have written to-day, but to reply to your very kind invitation to Bath. \* \* \*

With cordial good wishes to Mrs. W.

I remain, ever,

Very affectionately yours,

CHA. GRANT.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Bath, Sept. 27, 1797.

My dear Muncaster,

I cannot but touch on the topic, which you will conceive engages much of my thoughts, the death of my excellent friend Eliot. You knew his exterior, and pleasing indeed it was, and in one particular expressive of his character; but perhaps no one but myself knew him thoroughly. He was so modest, retiring, and unassuming, that neither in point of understanding, nor of religious and moral character, did he generally possess his proper estimation. I can truly say, that I scarcely know any one whose loss I have so much cause to regret. But I have the solid satisfaction of knowing that his mind was just in the state I should have wished, had I been aware of the awful change which awaited him. Peace be with him. May my last end be like his. You will not be sorry to hear, that, as Rose who was an eye-witness informed me, the effect produced on Mr. Pitt by the news, which came in a letter from Lord Eliot by the common post with his others, exceeded conception. Rose says he never saw, and never expects to see, any thing like it. To Pitt, the loss of Eliot is a loss indeed—and then his poor little girl.

This event is not unconnected in my mind with that of the rupture of the negotiation; but I have not time to trace the bonds of connection. Some will occur to you. I look forward with awe, but without dismay. I cannot believe we shall be cut off. Scourged, and severely too, we deserve to be. Even yet there is no recognition of the providence of God. I well remember your pointing out to me last year, the first lesson for Sunday se'nnight last.\* It struck me forcibly this season. Blessed be God, there is a secure and unchangeable portion reserved for those who diligently and humbly seek for it. May we, my dear friend, be incited to renewed alacrity in this most important of all pursuits, by

\* Jer. v. or xxii.

the stormy and turbulent state of worldly affairs. Kindest wishes for all your house from Mrs. W. (who knows you by character,) as well as from,

Yours ever,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. HANNAH MORE.

Bath, Sept. 1797.

My dear Madam,

Did you see in the papers, the account of poor Eliot's death; yet why *poor* Eliot? He was I verily believe a real Christian, and it is a singular satisfaction to me, to have received a little before his departure a letter from him, breathing a spirit of the truest humility and resignation. I feel his loss deeply, and shall continue to feel it; for, except Henry Thornton, there is no one living with whom I was so much in the habit of consulting, and whose death so breaks in on all my plans in all directions. We were engaged in a multitude of pursuits together, and he was a bond of connection, which was sure never to fail, between me and Pitt; because a bond not of political, nor merely of a personal quality, but formed by a consciousness of common sentiments, interests, and feelings. Well—he I trust is happy, and he is not improbably taken away from much suffering and sorrow. Pitt has almost been overwhelmed with it; I believe that he suffers more from the very texture of his firm mind. You will observe that the blow comes just when he has also to bear up against what deeply shocks him, Lord Malmesbury's return, *re infectâ*. Poor fellow! pray that the grace of God may yet visit him. He is the first of natural men, but "he that is the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

I took up my pen to say to you that I wish much to have a conference with you, and Lieut.-Gen. Patty, before it be long. We must come over and dine with you, unless you could without inconvenience give us the meeting some day at Bristol. I mean to visit some

schools there under an extraordinary man, who introduced himself to us the other evening, and quite *stunned* us. He had heard of Mrs. Wilberforce's wish (conceiving she is likely to be here once or twice every year) to devise some plan of turning her Bath visits to good account, and we know of no better object than the education of the indigent and friendless. But it is on this subject that we wish to discuss with you, so be ready, that we may profit from your experience. The School of Industry falls off sadly. The numbers have decreased within a year from one hundred and sixty to one hundred, and that number cannot be continued. I have written to Phillott and Sibley desiring to see them, and I mean to try what I can make of them; meanwhile send me any hints.

Yours truly,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

MRS. HANNAH MORE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Sept. 26, 1797.

My dear Sir,

I have not till this moment got your very affecting letter. Your very touching account of Mr. Pitt's sorrow has gone to all our hearts. I had anticipated the strong grief of that strong mind. Though it is late, I will not lose a moment in answering the most pressing, though not the most interesting part of your letter, because I am anxious to prevent your involving yourself. The boasted *liberality* on which they value themselves in the conduct of the Bristol schools is that relaxing toleration, which enables them to combine Quakers and Presbyterians, "*the sprinkled and the dipped*," by insisting on no peculiar form of worship or religious instruction; so that I fear in this accommodating and comprehensive plan, Christianity slips through their fingers. I hope and believe they inculcate industry, but I never went to see them myself, because I think they are carried on in a way I could not commend, and which it



might not be right to censure. The manager is a man who will torment you to death, if you give him the entrée. He is as vain as Erskine in another way; absurd and injudicious, and as fond of fame as Alexander. With all this, he is sober, temperate, laborious, and charitable; but one with whom I never, and you never, could coalesce, with views and motives so dissimilar.

Yours affectionately,  
H. MORE.

DEAN OF CARLISLE, DR. MILNER, TO WILLIAM  
WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Hull, Tuesday, ——— 1797.

My dear Friend,

I know you profess never to be much moved at any event; still, I believe, if you had *seen* me for the last fortnight, your compassionate heart would have been deeply affected.

I must be very short: I am not able to write. A considerable fever, with an increase of asthma, came fast on my poor brother, and brought him to the very gates of death. It was agreed on all hands he could not have stood such another night as one of them was. He still remains in a most critical situation: I very much doubt whether he will recover; and if he does, it must be a very long time before he be fit for much. This is not fear, but reality.

My constant and persevering prayer has been for resignation and support; but alas! alas! I can just say, from experience, "The Lord knows how to be gracious if we could but trust Him," and no more.

I have neither seen my brother nor Mrs. W—— for a fortnight, nor have I tasted, during that time, two ounces of solid food.

Oh, my dear friend! there is a something on this occasion crowds on my mind so thick and so close, that I should have been overwhelmed but for God's special mercy.

The case is here : a deal of this is bodily. I am weak, nervous, and worn out. "*Multis vulneribus oppressus, huic uni me imparem sensi.*" Then, from a very child, I have lived with this only brother ; he has been kind to me beyond description, and a faithful adviser by my bedside, in illness, on a thousand occasions. Lastly, no man's affections, perhaps, were ever so little divided by a variety of friendships as mine. For years past, I have said ten thousand times, I would exhort a youth whom I wished to be happy in this world, to *know* more people, and love them less ; yet God does not absolutely give me up to grief. Farewell ; and remember me most affectionately to Mrs. W., who will drop a tear.

N. B. My brother's mind is so happy, that it can hardly be in a more desirable state. "The promises are sure." Yesterday I was told that he has had your book in his hands for several days, and says he likes it better and better, and says he should have written to you. When I talked to him last I could get nothing from him but, "Let not your heart be troubled," &c. &c.

I am very unfit to write, indeed ; but duty presses me to say briefly, the election of a schoolmaster and lecturer is December 5th. It will be a sad thing if High Church be left deprived of both its pastors ; i. e., morning and afternoon. I am utterly unable to see any body, or take any further steps ; indeed, I believe I have done what I can for Thomason.

Yours affectionately,  
J. M.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. HANNAH MORE.

Broomfield, August 2, 1798.

Some friends of ours, Mr. and Mrs. Dikes, are travelling into the West. They are excellent people. He is the person who built the new church at Hull about seven years ago, which remains a blessed fruit of the late Dr. Clarke's wish to do good in spite of many obstacles.

I told them they must see all your operations. I beseech you receive them as brethren and sisters, and consider them as friends. By their surveying your different settlements, and seeing with their own eyes the effects of what you will relate to them of your modes of proceeding, you will not only produce in *them* a degree of heat, which, according to Sir Isaac Newton's comet calculation, will be twenty years in cooling, but very likely they may warm others, and set on foot something of the same kind in our *North Countree*. To Miss Patty More I also commend them, and to all your good sisters, in the warmest manner.

By the way, I ought to mention to you, that in case of my death, I have taken care that your Somersetshire operations should not lose thereby what I should allot to them, if it should please God to spare me. I thought it might be a satisfaction to you to know this, and an encouragement to you to venture boldly. But, I beseech you, spare yourself as much as is consistent with your carrying on your operations. While God continues so to bless your labours, I dare not desire you to abstain from them, though I see you wearing yourself out: but, indeed, you ought to economize in the expenditure of your strength, and be rather, for that end, prodigal of money.

Farewell. Kind remembrances. Our government are sanguine in their hopes of Nelson's overtaking Buonaparte—humanly speaking there seems no doubt of it. By the way, it may be a satisfaction to all your kind and earnest hearts, to be assured by me that the reports so artfully circulated concerning Mr. Pitt are altogether false. I spent a day with him, *tête-à-tête*, about a fortnight ago, and he is better than he has been all the last winter. Farewell.

Believe me ever yours, affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JOHN SMYTH, ESQ.

Broomfield, August 3, 1798.

My dear Smyth,

I have not forgotten the wish you so kindly expressed that I would send you word, after a time, how all went on in my nursery. I thank God, my dear Mrs. W. and our infant have both gone on uniformly well. Indeed I have the utmost cause for gratitude. If I look around me all over the earth, and compare my lot with that of ninety-nine hundredths of its inhabitants, I am compelled to lift up my eyes with wonder, and I am sure with humiliation. And again if I not only take my survey far and wide among all those who are now alive, but if I extend it backward, and proceed, one by one, through all the successive periods of the world, and all the various empires, there has scarcely been one from which I do not instinctively recoil; taking refuge in the age and the country in which I am placed, as those in which, above all others whatever, one would most desire, if one could choose, to fix one's existence. Yet I am sensible we may live to see sad scenes; but, I bless God, I have a firm persuasion that He will endow us with fortitude equal to our trials, or He will spare us any encounters which might be beyond our strength. Oh, my dear friend! how little, how for a moment, will all those concerns appear one day, about which we are apt to be so deeply interested! Tell me honestly, do you not find them diminish in bulk as you recede from London, or rather after a little residence in the country, and ready to resume their old dimensions after a few weeks of London soiling? Believe me, the former is their true size.

Will you be in these parts before the meeting of Parliament? For your own sake I cannot wish it, but I should be really glad of any opportunity of spending three or four quiet days with you; and this year there is little chance of our getting into Yorkshire. I hope Lady Georgiana and all your family are well; and, often



thinking of you, and always, when I do, with friendly regard,

I remain, my dear S.,

Yours, affectionately and sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

I began this last night, but was called off, and have been so much pressed this morning as to be scarcely able to finish it.

REV. THOMAS GISBORNE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Buxton, August 22, 1798.

My dear W.,

I have made an Irish acquaintance here, with whom I am considerably pleased : I mean Dr. Browne, the M. P. for Dublin University. He has much information, and apparently much candour ; and the character which I understand Johnson to have heretofore given of him to Garrick ("David, here is a young Irishman, who is at present modest,") still belongs to him. He is gone for London, where he is to arrive on Saturday, meaning to stay there three weeks. As I think it not unlikely that you may wish for an opportunity of *squeezing* him, I will add that he lodges at No. 12. Charles Street, St. James's Square. A person in your situation can of course introduce himself, or easily procure introduction, to any one. But if the use of my name may in this case save you any trouble, I saw enough of Dr. B., though only at the end of his stay here, to justify me in desiring you to avail yourself of it as you may think fit.

With respect to an union with this country, he said he had never considered the subject with the attention, or half the attention, which a matter of such moment would demand. We talked over one or two detached points ; and he stated what he thought of the Irish parliament very fairly. I believe that you are a decided friend to an union, if attainable. I, who evidently must

know too much of the business, must confess that I have my doubts. It strikes me that an union would greatly aggravate all the evils of *Absenteeism*. What is it that now retains in Ireland such of their noblemen and gentlemen of fortune as stay there? The circumstance of their having an independent legislature of their own stationed in Dublin. Remove that attraction to London, and most of them, I think, will follow. I also think so much better of our Houses of Parliament than I do of the Irish, that I apprehend they would suffer materially from that infusion of Irish members, which must result from a national coalition. I am no drinker of port; but I conceive that a person habituated to his daily pint of that liquor, even though not of the very best quality, would have no great satisfaction in learning that for the future it was to be mixed with a third or a fourth of Hiera Picra. It is possible that these and other disadvantages attending an union, might be more than counterbalanced by benefits. But that is a point concerning which I at present feel nothing like assurance. Dr. B. told me some curious anecdotes, coming under his own eyes, of individual Irish members of parliament.

Will you tell Babington that Mr. S. has got a letter from the present sheriff of Leicestershire, (a London banker, I understand,) which represents the Land-Tax Redemption as a scheme of ministry to lay the burden of the war on landowners; that a new land-tax is to take place, and *that* to be redeemed; then another, to be redeemed in like manner; and so *ad infinitum*, till gentlemen have paid the fee simple of their estates. Mr. S. is in no small pother about this; and conceives his authority to speak the sentiments of the London bankers, &c. Many thanks for your wishes to see us, though we cannot profit by them. We are, providentially, well, and very glad that you all are.

Yours, very affectionately,

T. G.

TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, LONDON.

Albany, 3d September, 1799.

Dear Sir,

It was not until the last week, that I had the pleasure of receiving from Mr. Naylor your obliging and very friendly letter of the 24th Feb., 1798. Accept my thanks for it.

Permit me to congratulate you on the promising aspect of affairs in Europe. England stands high, and while just, no one ought to repine at her prosperity. In my opinion, she does not pass for more than she is worth. Your tax on income does honour to the minister who devised it, to the parliament who adopted it, and to the people who bear it. If hereafter accommodated to a state of peace, it would be a powerful auxiliary to your sinking fund.

Our conversation here turns so much on Great Britain and (as some phrase it) her doings, that I find myself insensibly led to these interesting topics. Not only Great Britain, but every other civilized country, will have reason to rejoice when the present atrocious war, and the pestiferous principles which generated and have protracted it, shall cease to distress and to corrupt mankind. May that happy period not be distant.

With great esteem and regard, and the best wishes for your health and happiness, I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and faithful servant,

JOHN JAY.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO REV. THOMAS GISBORNE.

Near Bath, December 6, 1799.

My dear Gisborne,

Venn desires me to say that the mission plan has been misunderstood. It was not intended that the catechists should ordinarily baptize, but only in cases of necessity. This seems to take away the force of the Bishop of Durham's objection to the use made of Hooker's autho-

rity. Surely there might be some special appointment or designation for persons intended for teaching barbarous heathen. For the service requires qualifications very different from that of a minister in an enlightened, polished country, like this, where the truths of Christianity are already known and professed. Do meditate on this; and if you approve, state your opinion to the Bishop of Durham; to whom also be kind enough without delay, to represent the answer we make to his objection founded on a misconception of our meaning; *vide* rule 18. page 21., where it is expressly declared that catechists are not to administer baptism, except in cases of necessity.

I have not had time yet to read your new publication; but on casting my eye over the plan, which I like much, my attention was drawn to the chapter on Christian doctrines—and there I wish you had been more clear and particular in stating the necessity of repentance and faith. The terms “loving Christ,” “entire submission to Him and His laws,” “giving ourselves to Him,” &c., are, to any one who is thoroughly conversant with the subject, pregnant with meaning and quite satisfactory; also, the texts which go before, abound in particular instruction; but consider how very ignorant the bulk of the higher orders are on this subject. I am always fearful of a sort of practical antinomianism I have often witnessed . . . persons of dissipation, &c. appropriating to themselves the promises of the gospel, without even aiming at that grateful humility and contrition, which, mixed with joy, should be the prevailing temper of the true Christian. I must stop. Farewell.

Yours ever,

W. WILBERFORCE.

DEAN OF CARLISLE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Queen's College, Saturday, December 21, 1799.

My dear Friend,

In the compass of a letter I cannot explain to you in how great darkness and temptation my mind has



been of late, and, indeed, continues yet, to a degree. I can only say, at present, "all my bodily complaints are nothing to it." I could rejoice under them if they were double, treble, many-fold, if it did not please God to hide His countenance. I cannot explain myself so as to be understood. You would not, could not, believe my narrative of what passes, and has passed, night and day, and even in dreams. I have yet been kept, blessed be God, from despair; but I really know not where it will end. If ever it please God that I fairly get out of my present harassed state of mind, a ray of hope sometimes darts "that I may be happier than ever I have yet been." I call it a ray of hope, but in reality it rather resembles a flash of lightning in a dreadfully dark and tempestuous night, than the cheering rays of the sun. Flashes of lightning, at the same time that they dismay and terrify one, partly on their own account, and partly on account of the deep and dangerous ditches which they discover for a moment—the same flashes, I say, for the same moment, show that there is a good turn-pike road between the ditches, and enable the traveller also to avoid the danger, and to proceed on his journey for a time, though under great apprehensions, till another flash comes. This image is taken from what really happened to me in Lincolnshire (that dreadful summer, some few years ago,) in the night-time. The stage coachman declared that it was as dark as pitch, and stopped, absolutely, very often, till a dreadful flash of lightning showed him where he was. There was a West Indian in the coach at the same time, who frightened every body by his horrid imprecations against the coachman.

There are certain parts of Holy Writ which I endeavour to *grasp* with all my might, and this constantly, and so it has hitherto pleased God to support me; but I am sorry to say that my grasp is often a grasp of fear, and agitation, and necessity, rather than of willingness and holy confidence. I see that there is nothing else to be done: but I do not honour God by submitting cordially to His way of salvation. This is the great point

that I have long been aiming at, and I make nothing of it; and yet I know and am sure, that without this all the rest is sounding brass. My grasp, however, of which I now speak is strong, and I have had a little relief within the few days past. I do not know whether I make myself understood. I mean this. To submit to the condemning power of the holy law of God is a hard matter, a very hard matter indeed, to do this thoroughly: my understanding has shown me, for many years, that this was the touchstone of a sound conversion: and I have been busy enough in noting the defect of it in others; but as to myself, if I have got on at all in this respect, it is very lately indeed. The heart is sadly deceitful here; for, with Christ's salvation before one's eye, one may easily fancy that God is just and equitable in condemning sinners; when, if you put the case only for a moment to your own heart seriously, as a thing likely to happen, the heart *will* rise against such a dispensation; perhaps, indeed, with a smothered sort of opposition and dislike, but which is very steady and determined. Nothing less than the Holy Ghost himself can cure this, by showing us the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. A sinking man lays hold of a rope thrown out to him, and grasps it firmly. I bless God, I never leave hold of the rope, and I trust I shall be found grasping it fast to the last. Neither have I the slightest fear of the rope breaking; but if I do not feel and acknowledge thoroughly that the whole is a downright act of mercy, in every possible sense that you can twist the matter, I may still be suffered to sink for ever. I see clearly enough the way in which that dreadful event happens to many of those who are lost. Experience concurs to show the wisdom of the Scriptures, and the consistency of the Gospel scheme. I have a deal to say to you, and I can hardly keep it from breaking forth, but I must stop.

Your last letter, though short, is truly affectionate, and lays hold of me (in several tender places) very closely. The quotation from Milton, which you kindly wish me to advert to, is a favourite passage, and has

been so with me for many years. The sentiment is sound and pious I think, but, like every thing else, is liable to abuse by being carried too far. It is true God will never blame us for want of exertion, where power is denied, but I suppose the will is as much shown in feeble efforts as in strong ones, provided those feeble efforts be but proportionate to the faculties; it was so in the widow's mite, and doubtless it is the same in other things.

I purposely said what I had to say on other subjects, unmixed with the consideration of *your own health*, though that has been running in my head, I think I may say with truth, during every single line and almost every word that I have written. Wonderful beings we are! I hope I need not repeat to you how much I am always concerned when any thing unpleasant happens to you; a great deal more, I believe, than you yourself are, or than any body can conceive who does not know what it is to be hampered with such a nervous, irritable, and (if you will allow me) affectionate sort of composition as I am hampered with. I have felt in this way *towards you now for many years*, and it is not likely that my anxieties on your account, and apprehensions of any mischief should be less, because God has taken to himself what was very near and dear to me, and left me a sort of insulated being, and very, very—disconsolate is a weak word—nearly heart-broken is far nearer the truth. Indeed, my dear friend, my heart is so full, I can hardly get to the subject I am driving at; and I will, God willing, finish to-morrow.

Yours most affectionately,

J. MILNER.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Near Bath, Tuesday Night, December 24, 1799.

My dear Muncaster,

A thousand thanks for your friendly mediation; not but that I knew you would be abundantly repaid for

a hundred times as much trouble, by the pleasure you feel in an office so congenial to your nature. Your extract from our old friend's letter gives me real pleasure and relief. It is truly painful to a mind of any sensibility to think of being separated from any to whom it was once bound by the ties of mutual regard. Poor fellow! —You remember, I am sure, our conversation concerning him one day, as we descended from your Park after feasting our eyes and regaling our lungs from the mountain eminence. It makes my heart ache to think of those same topics. To Wyvill and Cecil I would address the language of Job, miserable comforters are you all—the former you don't know. He is a singular character; of perfect integrity, but apt to ruminate till his own ideas are become a part of himself, and like some distempered brain, surrounded with phantoms of terror of its own creation. Not but that I think our prospects must be gloomy to every considerate mind; and that feature, which I confess saddens me more than all the rest, is the unconquerable dissipation and volatility of our countrymen. It deserves no better name than practical Atheism.

Every good wish attends you and yours from me and mine, my dear Muncaster, at this season of congratulating.

Believe me,

Yours ever affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

REV. SAMUEL MARSDEN, Chaplain in New South Wales,  
TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Parramatta, 1799.

Honoured Sir,

Though I have nothing of any importance to mention, I could not let this opportunity pass without giving you a line. I have the pleasure to inform you that, after repeated application and much difficulty, a church is begun at Parramatta, which I hope, in time, to see



completed. There is no immediate prospect of my colleague having one built at Sydney ; too many difficulties are thrown in his way, which he has neither strength nor spirits to encounter. The governor himself has many embarrassments to contend with : his situation has been, and continues to be, as distressing as either Mr. Johnson's or mine. The evils under which the colony groans have increased to such a magnitude that government alone has power to redress them. Monopolies, and the price of every article of consumption, have gradually increased to this very day, in proportion as the trading officers have advanced towards independency. \* \* \* \*

It is truly a painful reflection that the morals of the lower ranks of inhabitants should be sacrificed to the avarice of a few individuals, as well as the temporal prosperity of the colony, which is the case at present. The soil and climate are as good, and, perhaps, superior to any in the known world. Nothing can exceed the prospect we have of a most plentiful crop of wheat this season. From the richness of the soil, and the salubrity of the climate, we might be the happiest people on earth, while avarice and extortion render us miserable. What must our situation be, sir, when the governor's salary is but a small sum compared with what individuals make by private trade.

We have long been anxiously expecting the arrival of Governor King, hoping some instructions for the better regulation of the affairs of the settlement will be sent out by him. We have got no public schools yet of any consequence : I have made several attempts to have one built at Parramatta, but have not yet succeeded. The only prospect of a minister's usefulness is in the rising generation ; and before any good can be effected amongst them, a school must be built for their accommodation. The children are very numerous, but are brought up at present in all the vices of their abandoned parents ; and many children are totally relinquished, and cast upon government for support and protection. These children, as well as the orphans, live with settlers, or others who

will receive them, and government furnishes them with provisions. The young girls, in particular, are all likely to be ruined for want of proper persons to superintend their education. Some measures would probably be adopted for the relief of these poor children if the officers thought their present situation permanent. They all, one after another, expect to leave the colony, and on that account are not interested in its future prosperity. If I once get my church completed, I purpose turning my whole attention to the erection of a school, and then I shall hope to see some fruit of my labours.

We begin now to be supplied occasionally with mutton. Sheep thrive exceeding well : the fleeces improve in quality yearly. In the course of time we shall be able to manufacture cloth. The number of ewes at present in the settlement is near 4000. This year we have had several whalers fishing on our coast ; some of them have been very successful, and will soon return to England with their cargo of oil. There is every reason to believe that a whale fishery will be established at Port Jackson ; should this be the case, the whalers may contribute to lower the prices of English goods in the colony.

Mrs. M—— and my little family are all very well. My native boy, whom I have had now more than four years, improves much ; he is become useful in the family ; can speak the English language very well ; and has begun to read. Should you be able, sir, at any time to send out a schoolmaster and mistress well qualified for such an office, they will be very acceptable, and their situation will be made comfortable here : none but married persons should come out in that capacity. The above I write in haste. I will give you a more particular account by the next conveyance.

I am,

Honoured Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

SAMUEL MARSDEN.

## LORD ELDON TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Docketed by Mr. W.,—"Sir John Scott, thanking me for congratulations.")

1799.

My dear Friend,

I have often addressed myself to the performance of my duty to you, in vain: I am so agitated by the kindness which has been expressed to me, and the apprehension that I may prove unworthy to retain the good opinion which has, I have reason to believe, hitherto supported me, that I cannot subdue myself to composure. My only consolation is that I have most largely and liberally experienced that indulgence, which overrates what is a mere effort of industry, when it gives credit for upright intentions. These are within my power: at least my humble hope is that they may be confirmed and established.

Continue to me your friendship and regard. I have long valued it: I value it more and more, as I feel I want the support I shall derive from it.

Yours ever faithfully,

ELDON.\*

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO WM. HEY, ESQ. LEEDS.

Newbury, January 21, 1800.

My dear Sir,

In the course of the last summer I had more frequent attacks of illness, than in any former recess from parliament. I went down to Bath about the middle of September last, and have been drinking the waters occasionally ever since, and leading, on the whole, an extremely regular life, and a more quiet and domestic one than I have enjoyed for many years. I am now returning to town better, I trust, but in what degree I am doubtful. It seems as if while I continue to go

\* Lord Eldon was created a peer on the 18th July, 1799.

on regularly as to hours, diet, &c., avoiding all fatigue, I might be equal to the discharge of a good deal of business; but any thing which is at all out of my system disorders me, and reminds me what a poor shattered creature I am. Yet let me speak of the goodness of God in this particular. Twelve years and a half ago I was on my way to Bath, in this very inn, far worse than I now am, and humanly speaking, less likely to live, and to be equal to business. I cannot look back upon this long period without many painful recollections, and a humiliating sense of the unworthy return I have made for all the unnumbered instances I have experienced of the Divine long-suffering and loving kindness. O that I might be enabled to spend the remainder of my days more to the glory of God and the welfare of my fellow creatures! I have entered into a little detail respecting my health, because I was sure you would be interested on this subject.

Have you had an account of what has passed respecting this said mission society? It is rather indicative of the temper of the Bench of Bishops, and in that view very important. If you have not received it I will endeavour to find a vacant half hour for scribbling it to you. My fellow travellers have been chatting around me while I have been writing, and, in spite of myself, drawing me into conversation. I am now travelling in a patriarchal way, with a wife and two children in my train, and am carrying off to town a daughter of Mr. Preston, of Flasby, a young woman of fifteen or sixteen, who is at school in town, and seems very piously disposed. Piety in youth is a lovely spectacle. While I think of it, let me ask you, does the "Antijacobin Review" meet with many readers in your country? It is a most mischievous publication, which, by dint of assuming a tone of the highest loyalty and attachment to our establishment in church and state, secures a prejudice in its favour, and has declared war against what I think the most respectable and most useful of all orders of men—the serious clergy of the Church of England. It has of late openly opposed and



vilified the abolitionists; it has condemned as puritanical the wish expressed by the society for bettering the condition of the poor, that the number of alehouses might be lessened to the proportion really wanted for travellers. But its opposition to the evangelical clergy is carried on in so very venomous a way, and with so much impudence, and so little regard to truth, that the mischief it does is very great indeed. It accuses them in the plainest terms, and sometimes by name, as being disaffected both to church and state.

Believe me, my dear Sir, with every wish for your temporal and eternal happiness,

Yours ever most truly,

W. WILBERFORCE.

What a scene does this world exhibit to any spiritual being, who from his elevation sees the globe go once round. It should quicken our efforts to secure for ourselves a refuge there, where sorrow and sighing and guilt and pain shall flee away, and the reign of love be complete and eternal!

REV. SAMUEL MARSDEN TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Parramatta, February 6, 1800.

Honoured Sir,

Though I have already troubled you with a long letter upon the affairs of this colony, yet I think it my duty to mention another subject of great moment to the happiness and prosperity of these parts of his Majesty's dominions, which is, the state of the poor orphans. No provision is made by government for their education, nor yet by individuals. It may easily be made to appear that a proper establishment for these children would eventually be a great saving to the nation, in addition to the religious, civil, and moral advantages which would accrue to the colony. There are, I believe, upwards of eight hundred children in the settlement. Some of these children were born on the passage to this country;

others, after the arrival of their parents. Their fathers, in general, are either sailors, soldiers, or prisoners; the former quit the country with the respective ships they belong to, and the two latter have seldom either inclination or ability to provide for their children. In addition to these, some are orphans in the strictest sense; others relinquished by their unnatural mothers.

From principles of humanity it has been an established custom to issue a full ration of provision from the public store to every orphan or destitute child, as an inducement for settlers and others to take them under their protection. Many, purely for the sake of the provisions, take these children, who would otherwise perish for want of care; but were there a public building, proper for the reception of these orphans, where their food could be dressed together, one third of the provisions would be quite sufficient for their support. It should be remembered, that the ration issued to the orphans is not given merely for the support of the children, but as a compensation to those who have the care of them; hence the above reduction could easily be made without any loss to the orphans, provided an establishment was made for them.

I have taken the liberty to lay this statement before you for your information. I cannot but hope, if government were acquainted with the real state of the children in this country,—what a burden they are to the state, while at the same time their education and morals are totally neglected,—they would be induced to adopt some means to lessen the expenses on one hand, and on the other, to have the children brought up in the principles of morality and industry. If some private or public establishment is not instituted for them they will be more abandoned than their unfortunate parents; at present they are brought up in idleness, and uncleanness, and robbery, and scattered up and down in every part of the settlement.

I have had frequent conversations with Governor Hunter upon this subject. His excellency is of opinion, if some person who had local knowledge of their situa-

tion was at home to represent their state (as this cannot be sufficiently done by letter), some redress might be obtained for them. Though I am very sick of the iniquity of this country, and anxious to enjoy again some little peace and quiet of mind, yet were I in England, and could see any prospect of a proper institution for the poor children, I should willingly embark again for New South Wales; in that case I should have some hope of doing a little good to the rising generation. Mr. Cover, one of the missionaries sent out to Otaheite, is the bearer of this: he has resided in this settlement long enough to see the state of the clergymen and of the children, and can furnish you with any further information upon this subject, if it should be in your power to support, or in any way promote so humane an undertaking as an orphan school.

I am,

Honoured Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

SAMUEL MARSDEN.

LORD ELDON TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

My dear Sir,

With the reluctance which has always stuck by me in the execution of my duty as a member of parliament, I have been down to the House of Lords to say a word on the Habeas\* Corpus Suspension Bill. I persuade myself that you give me credit for not being ungrateful to you for what you said upon that subject, in the Commons, as far as it had relation to me; and whilst I have been indulging what I have long panted for—the *aliquod temporis spatium inter negotia vitæ et finem*, &c., believe me I have felt deeply, gratefully, and cordially, the kind things you said of me in the House of Commons.

I shall feel a glow of satisfaction in the recollection

\* February 27, 1800.

that you thought me worthy of such notice. I intended to call upon you and thank you ; but in my little obscure retreat—my hole in the wall in Westminster Hall and at Guildhall—I have spent an immense portion of time for many weeks: I can't delay my acknowledgments, and I am afraid I must add that, counsel going the circuits, and having a great load of business, I fear I shall be in court at Guildhall till such an hour on Saturday night, as to make me quite without hope that I can wait upon you on that day. Give my best respects to Dr. Milner, and tell him that I shall buy his print, though, as an old-fashioned Oxonian, I should have liked it better if he had had a band about his neck.

Yours faithfully and sincerely,  
ELDON.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

London, June 21, 1800.

My dear Friend,

I hope this will find you and your fellow-traveller safely arrived at Cowslip Green. I meant to write largely, but am so pressed for time that I can only hint at what was to have been my subject—'Tis for Miss Patty.—Miss P. of Westmoreland should be urged to attempt some operations in your way. You should undertake to set her a going, and afford a distant hope of looking in upon her proceedings, if it should please God—I will assist cheerfully—I am debtor to that country, having lived there and left it as barren as I found it. I think of this with pain. Much might be done. Kindest remembrances and wishes.

In haste,—

Ever affectionately yours,  
W. WILBERFORCE.



THOMAS BOWDLER, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Docketed—Bowdler, very pleasing and pious.)

St. Boniface, July 6, 1800.

I thank you, my good friend, for yours. I am unacquainted with Witherspoon's writings; but my sentiments coincide with yours in so many things, and differ in so few, that I shall with great pleasure and attention read any book that you recommend. I will, however, confess to you, that when I read serious books, I do it rather for the improvement of my defective practice, than the improvement of my principles.

I was educated by parents who professed (and acted agreeably to their profession) what are sometimes called the strictest high church principles of the Church of England. I believe they would have followed Ridley to the stake rather than communicate with Cardinal Beaton or John Knox; and in another period would have followed Sancroft first to the Tower, to avoid complying with the unlawful demands of a popish king; and afterwards have followed the same Sancroft into retirement to avoid complying with those who deposed that very king. I was from a child brought up in those principles. My judgment has never varied from them, and I believe it never will, for I have no doubts as to any of the fundamental points in Christianity. All my opinions are fixed, and I very, very much wish that my performance of its duties were equally steady; but I hope that my deviations from what is right will be pardoned, not on account of what I may have done which is right, but on account of the atonement made for my offences by the death of my Redeemer. I also hope that, by the gracious assistance of Heaven, bestowed on my humble endeavours to improve my conduct, I may employ the remainder of my life better than I have done the former part of it, and may, for the sake of the same blessed Redeemer, be hereafter permitted to enjoy a degree of happiness, the permanency of which will make the events of this short-lived existence appear of little importance. Forgive my

intruding this short confession of faith, and send me the book you mentioned.

Believe me to be your very sincere friend,

THOS. BOWDLER.

JEREMY BENTHAM, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Q. S. P. Friday, July 18, 1800.  
5 o'clock.

My dear Sir,

Between 2d and 10th June, 1800:—Memorial, containing the very first communication, in any shape, on the subject of rise of prices. Audience refused. "Memorial" ordered, with refusal to hear, or to say upon what points.

Was not this an audience? say you. Yes, an audience in a passage; Mr. Long's long legs straining themselves to escape.

This is what Mr. Long gave you by way of answer to a question about cause of delay,—your question embracing (I suppose, but you alone know) the delay from July, 1799, to July, 1800. I told you it was a hasty answer, given under the pressure of your question, for want of a more satisfactory one. Was my construction uncandid? Find me one that is less so, and I will adopt it.

J. BENTHAM.

P. S.—Why mention this? Only that you may not turn aside from me, like the Levite, under the notion of my having cut my own throat by starting rise of prices.

One word more now I have pen in hand.

You think I ought not to do it so cheap: Morton Pitt is sure I cannot, and shall be ruined.

Mr. Rose, *per contra*,—the last time I had the honour of attending him, viz., about this time twelvemonth.

*Ipsissima verba.*

"So, Mr. Bentham, I find you have taken very good care of yourself; special care, indeed! I thought you had dealt more liberally with the public!" So far,

Mr. Rose. Do you think I flew at him as I do at you? I know better things.

Supposition whimsical enough, but not unprecedented:—Panopticon lost by four votes; two, because terms not high enough; the project, therefore, either knavish, or foolish, and at any rate, impracticable; two, because terms so high; project, rapacious and extortionate.

The article binding me to pay forfeit for post-liberation felonies would lose me many a vote. It has hurt me even with Abbot; it had hurt me with Nepean; not to mention persons too high to be named.

I satisfied him in three words out of twice as many reasons that I could have found. The loss could never befall me but in company with a much greater gain.

Either the man is hanged, and then his superannuation annuity is saved to me; or he comes back to me again, and then I squeeze it out of him with interest.

Nepean was satisfied; but the *Dii majorum gentium*, whoever they are, are above the reach of satisfaction.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MR. ASHLEY.

Bognor, September 4, 1800.

Dear Mr. Ashley,

There is nothing in which I would recommend you to be more strictly resolute than in keeping the Sabbath holy; and by this I mean, not only abstaining on that day from all unbecoming sports and common business, but from consuming time in frivolous conversation, paying or receiving visits, which, among relations, often leads to a sad waste of this precious day. These are practices, which have their source in an inadequate sense of the value of a season in which we may lawfully neglect our ordinary occupations, and, consequently, addict ourselves, without interruption, to religious offices. Self-examination, and much private prayer, should never be omitted on this day; and I have found it very useful to walk out and admire the beauties of Nature, and raise my mind to a considera-

tion of the wisdom, and power, and goodness of God. I can truly declare to you, that to me the institution of the Sabbath has been invaluable. I need not suggest, likewise, the duty of searching into our hearts on that day, examining ourselves as to our love of God, and of Christ, and purging out all malice and ill-will towards any one who may have offended us, trying likewise, where opportunity offers, to make peace. In all, we should ever associate the idea of our Blessed Master, and endeavour to render Him as much as possible present to our minds. I have learned by experience that if our acquaintance see that we are resolute in our determination to keep the Lord's day holy, they will, after a while, at least, leave us to ourselves, and even respect us more for adhering to the dictates of our own principles.

I have said a great deal on this subject: it is because I am deeply impressed with its importance; and you must expect to be exposed to temptations to break through the strict line which, I dare say, you wish to lay down for yourself.

I have a good deal of work on my hands just now; I will, therefore, occupy you no longer than to assure you that I am, with every good wish,

Your sincere friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO CHARLES GRANT, ESQ.

Bognor, September 27, 1800.

My dear Friend,

I cannot leave it to any other pen to inform you, that it has pleased God to visit me with one of the severest of human trials, in the dangerous illness of my dearest wife. The final issue is not likely to be very speedy, but from the violence of the symptoms, and especially of the delirium (this is very affecting), at the outset of the disorder, I am very frankly and properly told, that there is every reason for apprehension, though not for despair. Blessed, a thousand times blessed be



God, that I humbly trust I may believe death would be her unspeakable gain. I am sure we shall have all your prayers; your young folks will think and feel for us. Let them here see the uncertainty of all human enjoyments, and learn to fix their attachments on an unchangeable and immortal basis; then, though flesh and heart may fail, God will be the strength of their heart, and their portion for ever.

With every sentiment of cordial attachment,

I am,

Ever affectionately and sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

I have much to write. Mr. Venn, I am sure, will not misconstrue my desiring you to tell him and Mrs. V. these affecting tidings instead of my writing to him myself: he will also pray for me.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO CHARLES GRANT, ESQ.

Bognor, Wednesday, October 1, 1800.

My dear Sir,

Your truly kind and Christian letter quite warmed my heart. I bless God that, in His correction, He remembers mercy, and graciously enables me to receive His chastisement as the discipline of a loving father. Whatever happens I hope to profit from it. I have been particularly impressed with the reproof (too much I must unaffectedly say deserved by myself) contained in the third of Revelations, which our Lord addresses to the lukewarm church of Laodicea, which is closed with those words of mercy,—“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous, therefore, and repent.” Surely we all live below our privileges; and when misfortunes, from which my life has been remarkably exempt, come upon us, and we are forced to our foundations, we are surprised to see what a store of consolations is treasured up for our use.

But I forgot, I have not yet told you that God has

been pleased to bless the means used for my dearest wife's health, so far as that the delirium has gone off, and without any permanent injury to the brain, which, from its duration and force, was to be apprehended. Her fever, however, still continues high, and certainly we must not consider danger as yet over. Dr. Fraser providentially came at a most critical moment, and I really admire as well as bless the skill and caution and sagacity with which he felt his way. Stephen tells me of your kindness. I feel it as that which habit can render so familiar to me as to make me receive it without emotion.

The kindness and sympathy of all my friends is highly gratifying.

In extreme haste,

Yours ever affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE EARL OF GALLOWAY.

House of Commons, December 3, 1800.

My dear Lord,

I assure you from my heart that no man respects more than myself the character of a nobleman or gentleman who lives on his own property in the country, improving his land, executing the duties of the magistracy, exercising hospitality, and diffusing comfort, and order, and decorum, and moral improvement, and, though last, not least (where it has any place,) religion, too, throughout the circle, greater or smaller, which he fills. Greatly I regret that due attention, as I think, has not been paid to this class of persons. Every inducement and facility should have been held out to them, for fixing in the country, rather than in towns. Timber, bricks, and tiles, &c., used in improvements should have been exempted from taxation. The house-tax and window-tax should have been increased on town-houses, and lessened on those of gentlemen residing on their own property. For in fact your country gentlemen are the

nerves and ligatures of your political body, and they enable you to enforce laws which could not be executed by the mere power of government, and often preserve the public peace better than a regiment of soldiers. London is the gangrene of our body politic, and the bad humours it generates corrupts the whole mass. Through the medium of the great clubs, &c., one set of opinions, manners, modes of living, &c. are diffused through a vast mass of the higher orders. Domestic restraints, and family economy and order, are voted bores, while, from the nature of our constitution, aided by the increasing wealth, and the prevailing sentiments of the age, whatever ways of thinking, speaking, and acting, become popular in the higher classes, soon spread through every other. Hence respect for our nobility, and even for the king himself, instead of being regarded as a Christian duty, is deemed an antiquated prejudice.

Alas! alas! my dear lord, when I consider the singular blessings we have received at the hands of God, and how ungrateful and insensible we in general are, I am filled with grief and apprehension. "Shall not I visit for these things?" occurs but too naturally. Happy they who can secure a better subsistence than this world can supply, and who are urged, by considering the precariousness of all earthly happiness, to pursue, with greater earnestness, that which is alike excellent and unequalled in degree, as it is sure and unfading. I remain, my dear Lord,

Your lordship's obliged and faithful,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ———

Broomfield, January 8, 1801.

My dear M——,

I have been reproaching myself for not writing to you; but at this place I am even more pressed for time than in London. The explanation is that I have brought with me a mass of unanswered letters, and that

I find here a good library; the latter tempts me from the former, and the rest follows of course. I have been inquiring about a tutor for your nephew, and I doubt between J. and F. The terms of the latter are lower; but that consideration is of no weight whatever for two years, when the effect extends throughout the whole of life. I shall soon be able to determine. I spoke to Charles with kindness, and so as not to render him at all desperate. This seems to me a right course to take in the treatment of youth; indeed, it is the course which our heavenly Father adopts towards us, and prescribes to us in our treatment of our fellows. It will give me sincere pleasure to hear that he is improved. He knows how to behave admirably.

Go on courageously, my dear M., remembering, in the midst of all your activity, to maintain the inward life of your religion. Gal. ii. last verse. O how much easier is it to be active than to be spiritually minded; yet God and our merciful Saviour look down with complacency on our labours of love. I am sometimes uneasy lest, in these hard times, you should not be easy as to money matters, and should not speak freely. I beg you so to do, and to believe that it is a real pleasure to me to contribute in any way to your comfort. You certainly possess the secret of economy in charity; but remember your being in a Yorkshire town is a sound reason for my helping you to the supplies, were there no connection between. I am very glad to hear that Charles is at work. He and the hunters (and, God be thanked, the poor, where fuel is scarce) will benefit from the mild weather. I beg my kind remembrances to all your party.

I remain, my dear M——,  
 Ever sincerely yours,  
 W. WILBERFORCE.



## DEAN OF CARLISLE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Queen's Lodge, March 24, 1801.

My dear Friend,

The case is this: at Queen's we happened unfortunately, to have several clever fellows some time ago who should have filled our offices of trust as tutors, &c.; but were unqualified on account of their principles. I was positively determined to have nothing to do with Jacobins or Infidels, and custom has placed in my power the appointment of the tutors, provided they be fellows of our own college. Our own being very unfit, we went out of college sorely against the wish of several; however, by determining to make no jobs of such things, but to take the very best men I could find, I carried the matter through in no less than three instances—Thomason, Barnes, Sowerby. The consequence has been, a belief has taken place that we should continue to go out of college for candidates for fellowships after the cause had ceased. I have applications without end to this purpose, and not only so, but admonitions, sometimes anonymous. I enclose one that came lately. You cannot think how plagued I have been from a variety of quarters on this head, though I endeavour to make it known everywhere that we have now got two good tutors, and have no reason for going out of college.

The Bishop of Lincoln called on me the other day with Dr. Turner, and was inclined, I think, to have talked more politics than usual, if there had not been a third person present. He asked me whether a something was settled or not when I left town: he seemed to speak as if you knew, and as if I might have heard what he meant; something that was in doubt when he left London, and he seemed anxious to know if it was settled. For my part I talked quite in general, and told him, in answer to his express question, "What does Wilberforce

think?" that you spent all your time and thought about the poor, and could get nothing done for them

N. B. It is very positively said here that Pitt and the Bishop of Lincoln had a bill ready, if not printed, to take away all from the clergy, and make them pensioners at the Treasury.

Yours,

J. M.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Broomfield, July 18, 1801.

My dear Madam,

I have been desired by a Yorkshire friend of mine, a brother of Plumer's the lawyer, to request you to recommend to him any regulations, &c., for a school which he is opening on his estate in a village in Yorkshire, and any tracts, &c., for Sunday readings. Whatever you prescribe will be received as of approved authority, so do comply; and may it please God that this graft may lead to the production of good fruit, though in a colder climate. Secondly, the son of the Bishop of Nova Scotia is in England, endeavouring to form a library for a new university, and I have been desired to ask you for a copy of your works from yourself. It is too much almost to beg eight volumes, but the project appears to me well worthy of encouragement, and I recommend compliance. The establishment of a respectable and orthodox Literary Society in America, where French philosophy has shot its roots so generally as to poison the whole body of the soil, is a work of no small moment.

Thirdly, I was truly vexed to hear of your having been likely to lose money by the death of your future landlord, and shall be very glad to have it contradicted. Tell me how you have been in health as well as in purse.

If any answer be vouchsafed to Bere's rejoinder, let it be very short. I have not read his last, and I am per-

suaded few will, if not drawn into notice by the opposition of your friends.

Farewell, my dear Madam.

Kind regards to Lieutenant-General Martha, and all your family, and believe me

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO —.

Broomfield, August 4, 1801.

My dear M——,

Ever since I parted from you it has been in my mind to send you my serious thoughts on the situation and conduct of your young people, and on its natural effects. I pay no great compliment to my own sagacity when I say that I had anticipated your account. There was that utter vacuity and idleness which must depress the mind even of early youth itself, strongly as it seems secured by nature herself against the gloominess and lowness of spirits which want of occupation never fails to produce. The whole system must be changed. They must resolve to improve themselves, and consider themselves as bound no less to give to God and to their own consciences, as to their natural mentors and tutors, a strict account of their time, than they would be to account for diamonds if they were intrusted to their management.

I do not, of course, mean that they should be always at their books, far from it. Health of body is necessary for discharging the duties of life and enjoying its blessings; and for the preservation of health, especially in youth, much air and exercise are requisite; but these should all be taken on a plan and principle. There is a listless languid way of partaking of amusement which indicates that the person who is engaged in it has been equally languid in the hour of study and application to business. If, indeed, we had to do with those whose understandings were incurably defective, we must even make the best of it; but I see no great

reason to complain of nature. \* \* \* I have been forced to scribble so fast, that I fear I am scarce legible.

We think of you, and pray for you, and shall ever take a lively interest in all that concerns you.

I am, ever affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

REV. SAMUEL MARSDEN TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Parramatta, August 17, 1801.

Honoured Sir,

I have the happiness to inform you, that after much painful anxiety and many difficulties, the Orphan School at Sydney is at length opened for the reception of sixty girls. I cannot but view this institution as the foundation of religion and morality in this colony:—without an establishment of this nature, to rescue the rising generation from ruin, it could never prosper. The unfortunate children who are now taken under the patronage and protection of the committee for orphans must otherwise have been lost to society. I have transmitted home by William Balmain, Esq., a copy of our proceedings to the present period, and requested him to wait upon you with them on his arrival in London.

If you, sir, should have it in your power in any way to promote the above institution, you will render an essential service to this infant settlement. Should we be able to get a building erected for the boys, we shall want a proper person to superintend the school. If one cannot be met with in England qualified for the situation, opportunities sometimes offer here, if government would give any encouragement for a person of abilities to remain in the colony. Mr. Cover, one of the missionaries who returned from Otaheite to Port Jackson, was in many respects a proper person, but he could get no appointment, and therefore returned to England. Should Mr. Balmain wait upon you, he will give you every information respecting the state of the children.



I hope my colleague, the Rev. Richard Johnson, has safely arrived in England before this period. In consequence of his weakly state, I do not expect to see him any more in this country. My duty is now very hard; having no assistance, and preaching both at Sydney and Parramatta every sabbath day: much of the care of the Orphan School also devolves upon me. The colony is not much better in a moral sense than it was when Governor Hunter was here. Governor King has taken every means to prevent the introduction of so great a quantity of spirits as formerly; fifty-six thousand gallons of wine and spirits have been sent out of the cove since November last. These regulations may be productive of some good consequences in the end. I see little prospect of any reformation amongst the prisoners at large.

At present bread is very scarce, and the people suffer much from the want of it. This want must be attributed in a great measure to the idleness and drunkenness of the inhabitants. They put little or no value upon their crops, when harvest comes take no care of their grain, and frequently part with the principal part for spirits. You, perhaps, will have seen Governor Hunter since his return: his memory is dear in this settlement, notwithstanding all the odium cast upon his public character. Governor King is not more happy in his administration than Governor Hunter was. I do not expect his stay will be long; he finds much to contend with. I beg to refer you to Mr. Balmain for any further information respecting this country; and remain,

Honoured Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

SAMUEL MARSDEN.

REV. JOHN VENN TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Swansea, September 18, 1801.

Dear Sir,

Your two letters have been forwarded to me at this place, where I have been riding amongst the beau-

tiful scenes which this charming country affords. I purpose returning on Wednesday through Bath, where I intend to stay seven or eight days.

I highly approve of your taking your child from the servants, from whom he might learn many maxims and practices which it would require much pains afterwards to eradicate; but I very much doubt of your being able to meet with a governor who would devote his time and attention to him in the manner you wish at so early an age. Men qualified as you would desire have become so qualified by much thinking and reading, by uninterrupted improvement of leisure hours, and by conversation with persons of learning and reflection upon subjects which call forth the powers of the mind. I very much doubt whether such a person could so far alter his habits as to give up his chief attention to a child, whose versatility, trifling, and forgetfulness would be a constant source of vexation. In the order of nature, I think, that the education of very young children is committed to women; they only can bear with all their little foibles—they possess a tenderness and an affection for them which is never wearied out;—women possess a patience and assiduity in lesser things, which is rarely met with in men. A father's affection, indeed, will alter his very disposition; but I am speaking only of the difficulty which a person who is not a parent would experience in endeavouring to supply that place which women are, I think, exclusively qualified to fill. It perhaps may, indeed, be a difficult thing to determine the precise age at which a boy may be taken from the nursery or from a governess, and put under the care of a tutor. It must vary with the capacity, health, and disposition of the child.

Dr. — would, I think, be an improper person, even if he would undertake such an office. His temper is close and reserved, his manners grave and thoughtful, and he is often silent. These qualities do not suit children. His talents are formed to investigate abstruse points and elucidate truth, not to ingratiate him with children, and minister instruction to them in a pleasing

form. Added to which I am uncertain respecting his religious opinions; a point doubtless of the first importance.

I will, however, bear in mind your wishes. Perhaps a suitable person may hereafter occur; and should such an one offer, it will certainly be well to secure him, though not immediately wanted.

I beg my best respects and most affectionate remembrances to Mrs. W.

I remain, dear Sir,

Ever yours,

J. VENN.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

London, Dec. 11, 1801.

My dear Friend,

This whole morning I have been besieged or beseeched (blame Milton, not me) by a succession of assailants, whose attacks have been rendered more worrying by my mind being a good deal engrossed. May God enable us to say from the heart, Thy will be done. I am now taking up my pen (nearly time for the House) in the War Office, while waiting to speak to the Secretary at War; but though I may scribble rapidly, do not think that my sentiments, however hastily expressed, are hastily conceived. On the contrary, they are the result of reflection, and my deliberate conclusion. I have received from the Bishop of London a note, which I will enclose for your perusal. I perfectly agree with our friends at Fulham, that you had better not consult Gibbs;\* I cannot, however, say, that I am so clear, that at present you ought to abstain altogether from publishing.

God bless you, and guide you. I adhere to my old

\* Mrs. Hannah More had been advised to take the opinion of Sir Vicary Gibbs on Mr. Bere's publication.

opinion, that all these clouds, like the rack of the sky, will soon blow away, and leave all clear and calm.

With kind remembrances,

Yours, ever affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

The Bishop was very unwilling to read any of Bere's trash ; and really it is a hard service to labour through.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

London, Dec. 17, 1801.

My dear Friend,

The Bishop's note was but five lines, and I told you all the substance of it. But one word more. The Bishop, the other day, warmly expressed in conversation what he may perhaps express to you in writing ; and lest he should, I must anticipate him. He seemed to wish you would give up all your schools, by way of escaping from a situation which exposed you to attacks and conflicts to which your health was not equal.

But the Bishop never saw the schools : he never saw the country in its former, and in its present state. He has no adequate notion of the degree in which it has pleased God to bless your and your sister's efforts ; nor of the consequent hostility to be expected from those who are represented in Scripture (which does not refine away plain practical truths as we are apt to do) as opposing the establishment of the kingdom of Christ ; whether evil spirits or human beings acting under their influence. "I would have come unto you, even I, Paul," says the Apostle, "once, and again, but Satan hindered us." How hindered ?—not by standing in the way, and obstructing his journey, but by stirring up his agents ; probably by creating a necessity for St. Paul's continuance where he was, by carving out work for him, &c. ; and I doubt not several of those who were thus doing the devil's work were unwittingly his instruments : they perhaps thought they were doing God service.



But I have been led off from my main topic. Apply what I have said, however, to your own case, and be thankful that it is so far applicable. But for the relinquishment of the schools—so long as you can, continue them through evil report and good report. Quench not the Spirit; but so far as you can, forward His progress and multiply His subjects, praying earnestly for strength, for wisdom, for meekness, and that love which can suffer long, and yet be kind, without dissimulation; can bear all things—hope all things—endure all things. Indeed, my friend, I am sanguine as to the issue here—even here—upon this bank and shoal of time.

You shall hear from me more about this writing an answer.

Yours, with kind remembrances, in great haste,  
Ever affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

MR. KING, AMERICAN MINISTER, TO WILLIAM  
WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

January 8, 1802.

Will you, my dear Sir, take an early opportunity of conversing with Mr. Addington and Lord Hawkesbury, for the purpose of impressing upon them the value and importance of cultivating, in the many and easy ways they can do, the best possible harmony between our respective countries? No people ever had so many ways of engaging the good will and good wishes of another, as England has in respect to America, and, with rare exceptions, none ever employed fewer.

Some recent information that I have received from America gives me unusual conviction and solicitude on this subject. I have so often urged topics of this sort, and pointed out the occasions for the application of them, that I feel a reluctance in repeating them, even when my mind is acquiring stronger convictions of their importance.

I don't mean to insinuate that Ministers are deaf to

justice, and that they adopt measures of which we may justly complain. No, it is the omission of minor offices, which like an omitted visit produces more coldness and finally dislike, than a downright injury.

I beg you to excuse me ; I know myself to be right in these reflections, which regard the common good of our countries ; and though others turn a deaf ear, I am sure you will listen to my complaints with indulgence.

Faithfully, your obedient servant,

R. KING.

N. B. I remove to town on Tuesday next.

—— TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

April 5, 1802.

Dear Sir,

At the hazard of encroaching on your time, I am tempted to send you an account of the death of Robert Cowen of Helmsley, the favourite servant of the late Dr. Conyers, whom I suppose you must have known, as I have heard him talk of you.

I saw Cowen at Helmsley only two days before he died. Our conversation turned upon the low state of religion there. Though the parish is populous, there are seldom twenty people at church besides a few Sunday scholars ; and such is the declension amongst Dr. Conyers's old hearers, that there is not above one house in the town where family prayer is kept up.

Poor Helmsley how fallen ! I look with regret at the pleasant mansion your father built for Dr. Conyers, and which has been many years untenanted. Religion then was all the fashion, and the inhabitants fed richly on daily ordinances and expositions. Too richly, perhaps, as most of them appear to have been palled. The fallen state of that town ought to warn congregations in the established church who are deprived of evangelical pastors against the evil of dissenting ; for the Helmsley people, impatient with Dr. Conyers's successor, who cer-

tainly was of very opposite views, built a dissenting chapel, and crowded to it in shoals. After many vicissitudes of preachers and preaching, it is shut up, and the people go nowhere, but content themselves with railing at formal ministers and blind guides.

I am, with unfeigned respect, yours.

SIR CHARLES MIDDLETON, BART. TO WILLIAM  
WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Teston, October 26, 1802.

My dear friend,

It was my intention to have begged you to meet Mr. Pitt here if his stay had been lengthened beyond a day; but being obliged to be in town sooner than he first proposed, I had no time for invitation.

He came here on Friday and staid till Saturday afternoon. Mr. Fordyce accompanied him, and Lord G. Campbell: both farmers met him here; Mr. Gambier was likewise of the party.

His inquiries were very minute and judicious, and it is incredible how quickly he comprehends things, and how much farther he reasons on them than I can follow him. The day was very favourable, and we spent upwards of four hours on the farm and at the oil mill. Our in-door work was accounts, journals, forms, &c.

Upon the whole, I believe Mr. Pitt has it in his power to become the first farmer in England, if he thinks the pursuit worth his time and attention.

I have satisfied him, that much of the former is not required after his farm is brought into order, and that I managed three separate farms during the time I was in the admiralty and navy offices, and with more amusement than trouble to myself.

He promises me frequent visits in his road to and fro, and which may happen if he continues his present pursuit, as we are not a mile out of his way. If this should happen, I shall be obliged to you to give him the meeting,

He seemed much amused while here, and as I always had an attachment to him, I was sincerely glad to see him. What an instrument in the hands of Providence might not this man be, if he was surrounded with men of equal probity and disinterestedness as himself. But as this can never be expected, we can only look up and wonder.

I shall hope in the course of the winter, if we live so long, to see you and Mrs. W. here during some part of the time. I beg my kindest regards to her, and believe me always,

Very affectionately yours,  
CHARLES MIDDLETON.

RALPH CREYKE, ESQ, TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Docketed, "Friendly, Paley, &c.")

Marton, January 3, 1803.

My dear Sir,

. . . . . I have been reading Dr. Paley's "Natural Theology," and never was more delighted than I have been with his mathematical demonstration and elucidation of that cheering comfort—the goodness of the Almighty. Whilst I was at lectures at Cambridge I was completely tired of the "high priori road;" but now in the country, where I am in the low "primrose path," I think that I walk surely. His writings have always charmed me with their perspicuity and strict argument; and I feel my faith confirmed by his evidences, and particularly by that nice and accurate summing up of all the circumstantial evidence in his "Horæ Paulinæ;" my reason wonderfully assisted and comforted by his "Natural Theology," and every duty and every exertion encouraged by his philosophy. I never read any part of his works that afterwards I do not feel myself (*absit superbia dicto*) a better man.



WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO RALPH CREYKE, ESQ.

Broomfield, January 8, 1803.

My dear Sir,

I fully intended that this morning should not pass without my answering your friendly letter, but I must write *en galop* to keep to my purpose. However, in writing to a friend the stream of thought may be allowed to flow as rapidly as it will; and if it brings rubbish along with it, as torrents are wont to do, yet he will receive it with a welcome, in consideration of the source from which it issues. The word "rapidly" reminds me of a ridiculous story of the late Lord Stormont, who was what may be well called a heavy speaker, but who, having been ambassador at Paris, was listened to (and not undeservedly,) as being a man of sense. A foreigner was attending the House of Lords' debates below the bar, and his friend, an English travelled gentleman, was overheard translating to him Lord Stormont's harangue. As his Lordship went along in his drawling tone of language, "*Eh bien,*" replied the foreigner for some time, till his English friend at length proceeding to say, "*Il dit qu'il passe rapidement,*" &c. over that part. "No," says the foreigner, "I'm sure you're cheating me now." It is an absurd thing to tell on paper; but if you remember Lord Stormont's manner, and contrast it with the astonishment of the impatiently vivacious Frenchman, who, after bearing as well as he could the tardy enunciation of the noble Lord, was at last to be insulted with "*Je passe rapidement,*" you would own it would be a fine scene for the pencil of Hogarth.

Many thanks for your kind congratulations. I seem to myself a much more respectable member of society since I became a father of four children. . . . On Monday morning I was here interrupted, and forced to break off; so being unwilling to send off such a strange fragment of a letter, I resolved to keep it till to-day, and now I must *passe rapidement* to get my letter off by this day's post—so numerous are the visitors who at this

short distance from town find their way to my country retirement. One of my visitors has given a melancholy tinge to my thoughts. The widow of a clergyman who lived near the Humber, in Lincolnshire, and I believe was much respected—on what occasion, think you, is she come up to town? To attend on a son's last moments, who having gone young into the army in the American war, has of course been separated from her for many years, though still followed by maternal tenderness, and who is now under sentence of death for forgery; indeed, there were several indictments against him, so that a pardon, or even a mitigation of the sentence, was out of the question. I can't find that there was much harm (using those words in the ordinary sense of the world) in the young man. He had been patronised by the Marquis of Buckingham and by Mr. Windham. Alas! there is a wife too, a poor Scotch girl, without a single friend or acquaintance in London, and an infant daughter at the breast; and this leads me (by what train of ideas? you will say) to Dr. Paley. It is the truth, however, such was the train of ideas. Would that I could trace them out over your fireside at Marton! for there we should be to-day, if the weather without be as boisterously inclement with you as it is with us. I lay the scene of our interview there rather than here, because, when I can take my choice, I always place it as far as I can from the great city; being in this respect of the very opposite taste to Dr. Johnson, and preferring the *O rus quando te aspiciam* to the high tide of sentiment at Charing Cross or the Strand.

But for Dr. Paley, he is assuredly a charming writer; unequalled in perspicuity, and that, I doubt not, from superior clearness and precision in his conceptions. His language is as forcible as the great doctor's above mentioned, without its turgid sesquipedality, if I may describe the Johnsonian style by a Johnsonian epithet. Above all, his illustrations are inimitably happy; nor can I deny that we owe him the highest obligations for his masterly explication of the various evidences of Christianity, on all of which he has shed a light, and by bringing them

to meet in one point, accumulated an amount of force (speaking philosophically) which to a fair mind seems irresistible. It gives me pain not to stop here; but I must go on; and after all this, and much more which might be said (and no one would with more pleasure pour forth Dr. Paley's copious eulogy), yet must I say it—he appears to me a most dangerous writer, likely to lead his readers into errors concerning the essential nature, genius, and design of Christianity. I cannot now go at large into this important discussion; but we will take it *ad referendum* when we can have a little quiet domestic chat, to which, by the way, I assure you I look forward. I will, however, just let out a hint or two of my general meaning.

Dr. Paley, then, as I think, conducts his readers to the threshold of Christianity, but there he leaves them; but leaves them, as I fear, with a disposition to misconceive the great end and object of the Christian dispensation. Christianity appears to me to consider the world as in a state of alienation from God, as lost in depravity and guilt: pointing out at the same time “how we may escape from the wrath to come,” from the natural consequences of that guilt and depravity; and not only how we may be absolved from the guilt, but emancipated from the power of moral corruption. This must be effected by the power of the Holy Spirit, and under its influence, working of course through the medium of our natural and moral powers (for I am the farthest in the world from considering man as a machine,) we are to be rendered “meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” Now, the grand evil is, that men are not sensible of their lost state, chiefly because they are not sensible of the nature, and, still more, of the real guilt of sin. It is, indeed, a necessary consequence of our natural corruption, that we are disposed to be insensible to it. If we will be honest with ourselves, should we previously to Revelation have thought, that the guilt and evil of sin are such, as that to infinite wisdom, goodness, and power, it should appear necessary that the partaker of a divine nature

should empty himself of His glory, should become a sharer in all the weaknesses of our human being, and at last die a painful and ignominious death, in order to atone for the sins of mankind? The estimate of the guilt of sin with which we are here furnished, as well as the estimate of the amount of that suffering from which it was worth while (if I may be allowed the expression), even at such a price, to redeem the sons of men, are such as no other considerations will supply; yet we cannot doubt that these are the true estimates. Therefore, it ought to be the grand object of every moral writer (for what is time, even the longest life, to eternity?) to produce in us that true and just sense of the intensity of the malignity of sin (to use one of Paley's own forcible terms), and of the real magnitude of our danger, which would be likely to dispose us to exert ourselves to the utmost to obtain deliverance from the condemnation and emancipation from the power of sin. Now, here Dr. P. appears to me to fail.

Then again, he seems to lose sight, in a great degree, of that attribute of the Deity on which so much stress is laid in Scripture—I mean his holiness and justice. You will readily see how this is connected with his sense of the intensity of the guilt of moral evil. I readily grant that, prior to Revelation, we might have formed an idea of a Supreme Being of unmixed goodness (I mean goodness in a limited sense, for I have no doubt that in a true sense the justice and holiness of the Deity are in perfect harmony with His goodness); but as it has pleased God to give us a delineation of His own character and attributes, we are bound to draw from that Divine source all our conceptions of them, and that the express statements of the Scriptures on this head accord exactly with the conclusions we should be led to form from the scheme of redemption, I need only suggest. But Dr. Paley seems to have too low a standard of moral right and wrong, and a standard which does not assign the true scriptural place on the moral scale to those sins which respect the Supreme Being. Scripture



appears to me to consider the want of a supreme love and fear of God as the pregnant germ of all moral evils.

There will be no end of my letter if I do not stop here; and now I am doubtful if I ought to send what I have written. You will call it a sermon rather than a letter; yet, in writing to a friend, "I love to pour out all my soul;" and why should we practise any reserve on the most interesting of all subjects? A more reasonable doubt about sending my letter is suggested by the fear lest I may have done so little justice to my opinions, as scarcely in any degree to have put you in possession of my meaning. Such as it is, however, consider it, for such it really is, as an effusion of friendship: *that* I trust will give it a merit in your eyes. Give me credit for having a meaning where you may doubt about its justness, and note it in your memory for future verbal discussion. I have scarce left myself room to say that my dear Mrs. W. is going on extremely well, I thank God; and I beg my cordial remembrances to all your family.

Believe me always, my dear Sir,  
affectionately and sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

REV. WM. RICHARDSON TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Docketed, "Pri.—Mr. Richardson, very pleasing.")

York, January 24, 1803.

Dear Sir,

I have often reflected upon the commission which you gave me, in summer, when I had the pleasure of seeing you at York, though I have never yet exercised it. I believe the clergy to whom you allude are, in general, very honest and conscientious men, who act from principle, and that they deserve the character you have given them in your book, of being attached to the constitution of their country, both in church and state: thus it is with the *genus*; but when we descend to the *species*, it is amazingly diversified by peculiarity of tem-

per, education, rank, and connection. Much depends upon the cast of the writer or preacher that made the first impression upon their mind and conscience. Some of them lean too much towards the Methodists or Dissenters, from whom they first received their religious impressions, and break through the rules of the Establishment, in order, as they suppose, to do more good. The irregularities of these men have brought many serious inconveniences upon us, who proceed in an orderly way, by alienating from us the hearts of some of our flock, who are dazzled with the appearance of superior zeal and courage in such characters; and by prejudicing the minds of our governors against the whole body of the evangelical clergy as dangerous and disaffected men.

As the revival of practical religion in the metropolis was owing to the labours of the irregular preachers, it has introduced and established there a very bad taste among the hearers, which must be humoured by those who expect to get an audience in London. I need not describe to you the kind of meretricious eloquence that is necessary to acquire popularity there. This perverted taste has spread all over the kingdom, and vitiated the gravity and chaste simplicity of our pulpit style in many places. Few have escaped the infection. Among the vast numbers that are earnest and sincere preachers of the Gospel, there are not many to be found whose instructions would be listened to by a correct ear without a mixture of disgust.

I thank you for your present of Mr. Gisborne's Sermons, which are certainly free from the cant of the times, and yet warm and fervent. I find nothing to censure in them, but too much haste in deciding upon a main point of controversy between the Calvinists and Arminians, upon which so much may be said on both sides. He may alter his opinion on the subject if he live much longer, and had better have left it undecided.

I make this letter a cover for a communication to the "Christian Observer," which you will be so kind as to convey. As I harp too much on a tender string, I am

an unwelcome guest to many of their readers. But the evil of schism, and its mischievous tendencies, are so little perceived or guarded against by the serious clergy, that I cannot help calling their attention to it on all proper occasions. It is our weak side, and a point in which our cause is the most vulnerable and indefensible. On the ground of doctrine, our title to the character of true churchmen may be completely vindicated, but not on that of discipline and order.

Allow me to congratulate you on the addition made to your family. I hope Mrs. Wilberforce, and all her little flock, together with their father, are well.

May the blessing of God rest upon you all!

I am, dear Sir,

Your faithful and affectionate

W. RICHARDSON.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE RIGHT HON. WM. PITT.

Broomfield, February 4, 1803.

My dear Pitt,

You have read with horror, if you have read at all, the account of the French atrocities in St. Domingo. They are pursuing a system of extermination, and depending on no other expedient. The newspapers having affirmed that our government had been applied to for co-operation, I made inquiry, and I established to my own satisfaction, that (though Addington says government have nothing to do with it) our merchants have been applied to for ships to serve as transports, &c., and I believe that some engagements of this sort have been actually contracted.

A friend of mine, who, though no civilian, is not unacquainted with the laws of nations, assures me, that it is an infringement of neutrality to let out shipping to a belligerent power, and that the individuals of a state have no right to act in such a case any otherwise than as the government may authorise; but in the present instance, the power against which these ships would be

employed is not merely a power with which we are not at war; it is a power with which we recently had a treaty of friendly connection, which they religiously observed;—what is more, that power consists, in part, of a number of individuals to whom we had promised their liberty. We marched them over to Toussaint, and perhaps in the peace, some stipulation should have been made for their enjoying the privileges which we had promised them. But not merely to leave this undone, but to join in abetting their destruction by means the most faithless and cruel which the French revolution, so fertile in perfidy and cruelty, ever employed in its very worst times, and through its very worst agent, is surely a degree of baseness which even those whose moral nerves are hardened to such a temper as to enable them without remorse to defend the slave trade, can scarcely justify.

For the policy of the measure, I have no time for further discussion, nor, in writing to you, can it be necessary. I will only say, that judging on principles the most dryly selfish, what more or better could we desire than to see Buonaparte gradually wearing away his strength, disgusting his army, &c., on the one hand, while the free blacks of St. Domingo are gradually wearing away on the other, to the great delight of our eaters of turtle? But if, by our means, Buonaparte is enabled to send over so many troops at once as to carry his purpose, both his army and that of his opponents will be reserved for future service; and is it too much to say that this service will be the attack of our colonial possessions? Let me beg you to consider this well, my dear Pitt, and to write to Addington about it. I do not like to talk with him on it, though I did yesterday, conceiving it was only due to him to let him know how I felt, and, indeed, to ask if government had any thing to do with it. I cannot help suspecting that our merchants would not engage in such a transaction without some hint that the service would not be disagreeable to administration. I must say I feel most strongly on this subject, and if you will support me, there is no consideration on earth which shall prevent



my proceeding, if necessary, by impeachment against those who may be concerned in it (if I find that the law of nations is as I suppose); at all events, unless government will prevent the transaction from going forward, which a word from them would stop, I am resolved to bring it before the House. I shall be greatly obliged to you for a line. I scarce need say that I abhor, from my inmost soul, the idea of cultivating Buonaparte's friendship, and the continuance of peace, by lending ourselves to his abominable projects. Once more, let me beg you to let me have a line, and mention when you mean to be in town.

I am ever affectionately yours,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

My direction is either London or Clapham Common.

RT. HON. W. PITT TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(Docketed, "Pri.—Our helping French, &c.")

Walmer Castle, February 10, 1803.

My dear Wilberforce,

I should have written to you sooner, but a slight bilious attack which has confined me three or four days, made me unable to judge when I should move to town. I am now almost entirely recovered, and shall probably set out the beginning of the next week. As soon as I arrive, I shall be very glad to talk over with you all the questions which arise out of the horrid scenes at St. Domingo. There is, unhappily, no termination of the contest to which one can look without dread, and therefore no system of conduct which can be pursued with entire satisfaction; but, certainly, to aid the French in their present measures is as contrary to all general ideas of policy, as it is revolting to our feelings; and I think there must be some legal mode of preventing British merchants from being concerned in such a transaction. But there are such strange feelings and prejudices on all

subjects which are in any degree connected with the slave trade, that great difficulties may arise in the way of any measure that can be proposed to parliament on the subject. This, however, I shall be very desirous of discussing with you.

In the mean time I am sure no possible good can be done by my writing to Addington.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. PITT.

W. WILBERFORCE. ESQ. TO THOMAS BABINGTON, ESQ.

London, March 4, 1803.

My dear Tom,

I am writing to you without the loss of a moment, because Macaulay told me to-day that a ship was on the point of sailing to Madeira. The gentleman at Madeira, of whom you speak, is constitutionally shy in the extreme, but I can also conceive a certain dread of you as over religious. You will, however, I am sure, conduct yourself towards him so as to moderate his prejudices; and who knows but that you may have an opportunity of throwing in something by and by which may tend to his eternal benefit? I remember hearing that Governor Johnstone, meeting Lady Huntingdon at Cheltenham, expected her to open on him directly with a religious battery—at a second meeting, the same. She behaved with great politeness and propriety, but did not bring forward her religion; this piqued him, and it went on, till after a while he was very earnest with her to explain to him fully all her sentiments. This of course she did, he listening with the most serious attention to what he would probably have heard with coldness or contempt, if she had bolted it out to him prematurely and unseasonably. Not that I suspect you of thus brusquing matters. It is rather my own fault where, which is too often the case, I am not too negligent about the spiritual concerns of my friends. But the story came into my head, and so I tell it.

A word on my speech at the opening of the session. I believe, from what you say, that you would have quite agreed with me, for I did not push my doctrine at all to extremes. I only urged that both reason and history, and recent experience, concurred in inculcating on us the duty of being very cautious indeed in our engagements to foreign powers; that we were too little impressed with a sense of the value of our insular situation, and of the peculiar blessing of being naturally armed with the instrument of a naval rather than a military force; that we scarcely ever ought to engage in continental quarrels as principals; and that we should ever be on our guard against being drawn into continuing too long a war, which, in its origin, might be just and necessary. There was a good deal of history in which I was clearly right; and Lord Hawkesbury expressly told me he did not mean that I had affirmed the positions he combated.

I think you would have entirely agreed with me also in all I said in favour of our adhering to the same principles of policy which had prompted us to conclude the late peace; of the undesirableness of war, and of the true policy of Great Britain in her present circumstances. Alas! I think I see "*bella, horrida bella,*" in prospect, and the chief obstacle in the way appears to me to be the state of the French expedition in St. Domingo, and the bar which war might oppose to Buonaparte's sending over fresh reinforcements. Hearing on every side remonstrances which have a warlike aspect, it forces itself on my mind that we have shown ourselves an ungrateful, profane people, and I fear God will have a controversy with us, and is about to make us suffer a part (but how heavy a load may that part imply) of the punishment we have justly merited at His hands. Alas! alas! my heart sinks within me when I look forward to the idea of the renewal of hostilities. But may a gracious God give us strength to bear whatever He may impose on us. I would humbly cultivate that peace which may keep my heart, and fill it with love, and confidence, and submission. My dear Babington, I could

run on for hours, but I must stop. Farewell, my dear friend; may the best blessings be the portion of you and yours! O, my dear friend, how little will all worldly things appear when we get into the eternal world!

Kindest remembrances,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. But how shall I tell you that I have ascertained that the French government have actually engaged some English ships to carry over troops and stores to St. Domingo—whether to serve also as stiffers or drowners I know not?

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

London, March 22, 1803.

My dear Muncaster,

I am sure if you had known the state of my *res domestica*, you would have been deeply interested for us. I really forget whether or not I have written to you since the illness of our dear little girl: she has been at the point of death, and was twice thought to be actually gone. But, I thank God, she has been spared to us; and though you would scarcely recognise your old merry little friend under the pale and sober countenance she now wears, yet I trust she is gradually recovering. Such incidents are highly salutary, however painful. I can feel for you, my dear Muncaster, when I write thus. I fear my letter may cause your wound, though an old one, to open and bleed afresh.

I thank God I have been by degrees returning to my ordinary state of health and strength, though at this moment I am reclined on a sofa, owing to an accidental, and I trust, temporary attack. As to politics, where shall I begin, or what shall I say? I verily believe Addington to be a man of good understanding, of a generous temper, of pure intentions, and of far more religion than almost any of our public men. But there is a sad want of energy. I have pointed out to



him many and grievous abuses, yet they are not rectified. Some of them would make your blood boil. This very day, to my surprise and concern, I heard that a set of men, of whose shameful misconduct I had been informed through a friend of yours as well as other channels, instead of being turned out with disgrace, as I expected, were going to have 200*l.* per annum added to their salaries. Cobbett is a foul-mouthed fellow; but there is too much foundation for his charges on the state of the navy, dockyards, &c. Then our poor black clients. O my dear Muncaster, my heart bleeds to think of their wrongs, and of the insulting compassion, for such I feel it, which has been expressed by those who suffer them to be still torn from their country, and all that is dear to them, and to undergo all the abominations of that detested system.

You have heard that the account of Buonaparte's language and demeanour towards Lord Whitworth, at his wife's drawing-room, was really true. His hatred of Great Britain knows no bounds; and I fear, from what I hear, that there is in France in general a rooted hostility to this country. All agree in this who have had an opportunity of knowing the sentiments of the people of that country. Yet had we but an administration who, by a truly popular course, beginning with the king on the throne, would call forth the public spirit of this country, humanly speaking, I should have little fear. But—well, don't let me infect you with my gloom. We have deserved to be chastised; and the way in which Providence commonly punishes nations is by leaving them to the effects of their own vices and follies. Farewell, my dear Muncaster. Kind remembrances to Lady Muncaster and your daughters. Mrs. W. cordially joins.

Yours ever sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

London, April 16, 1803.

My dear Muncaster,

I flatter myself that you will be ready to abuse me for not writing to you this week, when a little recess from parliamentary business would of course leave me more leisure for the service of my friends. I really did intend paying off all my epistolary debts, but somehow or other, the week has rolled away insensibly, and never do I remember less done in it. My bodily state has in part made me inefficient. There is certainly a *something* which is very peculiar, even stout people feel it; with a blazing sun there is a rawness which is not dulcified, just as you sometimes find an acid which no sugar will overpower.

We are just returned to Palace Yard, to spend Sunday in quiet with our children, having been visiting at Henry Thornton's and Lord Teignmouth's. Not having seen any one since my return, I have no news to tell you. There certainly has been a negotiation with Pitt, in which his return to power, and that of some others of his ministry, has been in question. Whether it is over, or if over, what is the issue of it, I know not. There is one view in which it is honourable to Pitt to be called out of retirement in the time of difficulty and danger.

"The gleamings of peace should new tempests deform,  
The regret of the good, and the fears of the wise,  
Shall turn to the pilot that weathered the storm."

Yet in another view I like it not. It will associate the ideas of Pitt and war together as much as those of Fleury and peace—a far more desirable combination. The lower orders to a man will be likely to feel this; and you will anticipate the use which will be made of it by Fox and his partisans.

I hinted to you that I feared there was too much cause for the reports in circulation of the gross mismanagement of our navy. Do you see that abusive fellow, Cobbett? He is too low, and bitter, and indiscriminate;

but his paper is often worth reading. His charges against the Admiralty are precise, and if they can be verified, no punishment can be too great for the delinquency. All from whom I have heard are in the same story. I own I feel more than all the rest what I fear has taken place, that just and grievous matter of offence has been given to the sailors. What a disappointment to me, who had reason to apprehend from Addington's language a year and more ago that some grievances which had long existed should be done away, and now ships have been sent to sea with two, three, and four years' pay due to them, directly contrary to Act of Parliament. If we hear of a general mutiny in the West Indies it will not be at all wonderful. From what I hear, this subject, if war does not take place, will be brought forward in parliament. How the negotiations will end no one can guess. There is something quite unaccountable in the orders and counter-orders about evacuating the Cape of Good Hope.

O my dear friend, I wish I were out of the bustle. How ardently do I pant for the shade! If I durst carve for myself I would not continue a week longer in harness. But I am ashamed, overflowing as my cup is with blessings, to say any thing which implies dissatisfaction with my condition. Never had man more cause for thankfulness, and I ought to be more actively grateful than I am.

Farewell, my dear friend. With kind remembrances to Lady M.,

Yours ever,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

DR. PERCIVAL, M. D. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Manchester, June 24, 1803.

My dear Sir,

By the particular desire of Mr. Brougham, a young advocate now at the Scotch bar, and a very intimate friend of my son, I write to request the honour of

your acceptance of "An Enquiry into the Colonial Policy of the European Powers," in two vols. 8vo. He has directed his booksellers, Messrs. Longman and Rees, to send you a copy of the work; and it is my pleasing office to introduce it to your notice. Mr. B. is a man of extraordinary talents and acquirements. He is descended from an ancient family in Cumberland; but his father having married a niece of the late Dr. Robertson, the historian, was induced to settle at Edinburgh, and to educate his son in the university there. Our Royal Society have lately elected him a member on account of several communications, which display a profound knowledge of mathematics and physics. His prevailing taste, however, is for polite science. And I trust you will find in the volumes which I have announced to you great accuracy and extent of research, as well as acuteness of investigation. You will be gratified in observing that he adopts your ideas concerning the negro slave system; and perhaps will be astonished—at least I was so—at the detection of many gross misrepresentations in the writings of the late Mr. Edwards.

Is there any chance of your making another excursion to Lancashire? To see you again under this roof would afford the most cordial satisfaction to, my dear Sir,

Your affectionate and obliged

Friend and Servant,

THOS. PERCIVAL.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Broomfield, July 4, 1803.

My dear Muncaster,

We want you here sadly. There is a melancholy torpor, partly the result, I hope, of a sense of security, but partly, also, I fear, of a still worse sensation. I am sure you would concur with me as to the steps proper to have been pursued: they should have been calculated to give an electric shock to the body



politic ; whereas, now, six weeks after, we are debating on the detail of the proposition made by ministers ; and some months, I fear, will elapse before the army of reserve will be sufficiently adroit to be with justice to themselves and to their name opposed to the veterans of France. We have had one or two singular debates. A Col. Crawford has given us some military lectures.

George Hammond, the Under Secretary of State, dined with me on Saturday. A messenger came down to him in the afternoon, who was just arrived from France. He had seen Buonaparte at Boulogne on Friday morning. One of our frigates being supposed to know he was there, came as close as possible, and fired into the town, too far off, I believe, to do any execution. Buonaparte ordered the artillery of the place to be pointed against her ; and the powder being bad, and the discharge not answering his wishes, he became so furious as to tear off, with his own hands, the epaulettes from the officer's shoulders.

Well, my friend, it is my only comfort that all human affairs are in higher hands than ours ; and we are assured that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. Be it our care to secure this, and then we may exclaim, in the triumphant language of the Psalmist (Psalm xlvi.). Farewell, my friend ; I wish I were with you ; my mouth waters to think of your rocks and mountains, and shady walks.

Kindest remembrances,

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

I will give you a toast,—“The Right Honourable George Tierney.”!!!

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ROBERT CHAMBERS, ESQ.

Broomfield, July 11, 1803.

My dear Sir,

It was with no small vexation, that, on my way to church yesterday morning, the thought suddenly shot

into my mind, that I had neglected the execution of my engagement to furnish you with some hints for your northern tour.

What with the defence of the country, what with the tax bills, the time I can work is so engrossed, that I should feel myself scarcely warranted to steal away from these occupations the few moments necessary for writing to you, but for my promise. I hope this will find you before you quit Derbyshire, in which case, I recommend your proceeding to Sheffield, and seeing the manufactures of the place. I will enclose a note to a gentleman in business there, who will show you the lions of the place; thence through Rotherham, where you should see the iron-works, to Barnsley and Wakefield, seeing by the way Lord Strafford's beautiful, and Lord Fitzwilliam's magnificent seats; thence to Leeds, where if you can be on Tuesday, you will be well recompensed by seeing the Cloth Market. If you can spare time, it will be worth your while to go to Halifax, and see a beautiful valley near it, Todmorden. Lord Harewood's seat, a little north of Leeds, is one of the finest in the kingdom, and the grounds exquisitely beautiful; thence to Ripon, see Studley and Hackfall, and through Masham, Middleham, Askrigg to Sedbergh, and Kendal. In Wensley Dale, soon after Middleham, is the beautiful waterfall Aysgarth Force, and two or three extraordinary waterfalls, especially Hardraw Scar, five miles on your way from Askrigg towards Sedbergh. You will here see a peculiar sort of country and of inhabitants—multitudes of small yeomen. From Kendal either to Fellfoot, if you have a mind to see the whole of Windermere, or to Bowness, if half will satisfy you. I advise you to fix your Windermere head-quarters either at Low Wood or Bowness; not Ambleside for convenience; but, perhaps, Miss Pritchard's hospitality and agreeable manners will offer you (and make you gladly accept the offer) a residence in her most delicious habitation. It is an earthly paradise.

From Windermere cross the mountain Kirkstone into Patterdale, and the whole length of Ullswater.

There, my friend Mr. Clarkson will, I am sure, point out to you any beauties in his neighbourhood, which a fuller acquaintance with the scenes around may have brought to his knowledge. Nine miles from Penrith is Nunnery, a place seldom seen, but the sweetest in its way in England. A sort of pocket edition of scenery, which you usually find only in the majesty of gigantic proportions—thence to Keswick, where you must stay two or three days, and especially take a round through Borrowdale and Buttermere, and Crummock Water, and through Newland's Vale; also, you must go the whole road from Keswick to Ambleside; it is the most delightful ride in England. If you are a mountaineer, cross Hard Knot and Wrynose to Lord Muncaster's, who, from what I will immediately write to him, will receive you with his characteristic hospitality; and from Muncaster, if you really have a mind to see the interior of the country, go by Wastdale, and over the Styhead into Borrowdale, and thence to Keswick again; it is the very *deliciæ* of mountain scenery. If you prefer a different order you may reverse the arrangement, but do not omit seeing these lovely scenes: I have myself explored them all. If you do not go into Scotland, I would advise you to go by Appleby and Greta Bridge, (visit Morritt, to whom I will give you, if you tell me you will pass by him, a few lines,) and the banks of the Tees to Durham, and thence to Newcastle. Cocken is between Durham and Newcastle, a romantic place, rivaling Hackfall, as I have been told. The military road from Carlisle to Newcastle is the most dreary, comfortless length of fifty miles (at least was twenty-five years ago) I ever remember. I will enclose a note, which on showing to certain persons in certain places, will obtain for you civilities; but I need not tell you that men of business have not much time to spare for social intercourse.

While engaged in writing to you, I have been transported in idea to the lovely scenes I have been naming, but how lively a contrast in my present actual situation! I am toiling during the day, in a hot, dusty, tumultuous

city; and for the secure tranquillity of the peaceful vales of Westmoreland—busy preparations, but too tardy, I fear, for the reception of our inveterate enemy. All who know any thing of the matter are alarmed, I find, in proportion to their knowledge. We certainly are not prepared for an invasion, and our people scarcely seem aware of the exertion which the crisis requires. I hope you will endeavour, wherever you go, to make people acquainted with their real danger, and with the necessity of the most vigorous efforts. If our zeal in defending our country were but half as great as that of the enemy in attacking it, humanly speaking there would be no room for fear; but I often dread lest God should employ Buonaparte as His scourge for the punishment of an ungrateful and dissipated people, who, blessed with unequalled privileges, are too little regardful of Him who bestows them. I must economize my paper not to exceed an ounce. I heartily wish you health and happiness, and am,

My dear Sir,  
 Ever affectionately yours,  
 W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO WM. HEY, ESQ. LEEDS.

Broomfield, July, 13, 1803.

My dear Sir,

There is no levee to-day, but my colleague and I will present your address as soon as we are able. I am glad to see the spirit of the people beginning to rise. Though it is my decided opinion that the war was engaged in by our administration most unnecessarily and unwisely; yet, now that we are engaged in it, every effort must be used. The most enlightened and experienced in naval and military matters in this part of the world are most alarmed; and we all (I mean mankind in general, and especially my own circle of friends) believe that government have been sadly dilatory. How many weeks have elapsed since they, who chose their



own time, began the war, yet we have only just passed the bill which is to provide an army to defend us. I fear we have scarce 20,000 effective infantry in all Great Britain; and the measure which is to call forth the irregular force, the voluntary zeal of the country, is not yet brought forward. I sometimes fear lest it should be the will of God to punish our forgetfulness and ingratitude by the instrumentality of His scourge, Buonaparte, and that, for this end, as He commonly executes His purposes by natural means, He has infatuated our counsels, and infused a fatal torpor into our political body; yet I think, the greatly increased proportion of truly religious young men who are coming forward are a token for good; a sign that though we may be scourged, we shall not be finally abandoned to the fury of our enemies.

Whatever I think of the grounds of the war, or of the manner in which preparations have been hitherto made for it, you will not doubt of my being careful not to say any thing publicly which may tend to damp the ardour or repress the efforts of my countrymen. I wish to assist in the only way wherein I can be useful, in rousing them to a sense of the indispensable necessity of exertion, and to a conviction of its being alike the duty and the interest of every member of the community, from the highest to the lowest, to devote his utmost energies to the public service. I have been considering where and how I can be most useful. In acting as a soldier in any capacity, or in any department of active exertion, I should be worse than useless. My wretched performances would not only disgrace my own character, and prevent my doing good in any other way, but would dispirit others, and damp their ardour. I cannot ride a mile; I cannot, most days, walk half a one, without bringing on an attack of illness; and exposure to the rain for three minutes would infallibly send me to bed in a fever. Under these circumstances, I yet am placed in an important public station, and when parliament has risen, it occurs to me sometimes that I might possibly be of some use in Yorkshire in stirring up the spirit

and correcting the erroneous conceptions of my countrymen. I might probably be able, if it were proper, to hire a house for my wife and children, and making that my head quarters, might visit several different parts of the country, as circumstances might require; yet, when I consider my weakly frame, and that any fatigue (what no one in health would esteem such) quite disables me, I am led to believe that, during the recess, it would be more proper for me to remain in quiet, attending to my health and my family, and also using my pen in support of the common cause. Do be so kind as to weigh this question well, and give me your honest counsel. You will consider it as a Christian, and I therefore put it to you with the more satisfaction, and shall receive your advice with the more deference.

Alas! my dear sir, these are times when the father and the husband must feel alarmed when he places before him the possible evils to which his wife and children may be exposed. Did you ever see Denon's travels? they exhibit a faint sketch of the treatment we might reasonably expect if the French should invade our peaceful dwellings. But what an unspeakable comfort it is to reflect that all events are under the guidance of our all-merciful Father and Redeemer, and that He has promised all things shall work together for good to them that love God; yet my nature, I own, not formed for these turbulent scenes, turns in idea to that more tranquil situation wherein one might enjoy the sweets of domestic comfort and religious retirement. Pray for me, my dear sir. All who fear God ought now to set apart a time for prayer for their country. I have been sadly pressed for time, and must break off.

Yours ever affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

## BISHOP PORTEUS TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Fulham, August 10, 1803.

Dear Sir,

I very sincerely lament with you that no fast-day has yet been appointed. Before I left London to go into the north I mentioned it to the Archbishop, and understood from him that it was his intention to propose it without delay. What has occasioned the delay I know not, as I am but just returned from the north, and, indeed, am never consulted in matters of this nature, which are exclusively under the direction of the Archbishop.

The only thing that occurs to me is, that our fast-days have, I think, been always in the winter, generally after the meeting of parliament, when the town is full, and when both houses of parliament can attend divine service at the Abbey and St. Margaret's, which in the recess they cannot do. I do not at present recollect a single instance of a fast-day when the Houses were not sitting. It might, therefore, be thought more consonant to ancient usage to wait till the parliament met in the winter, and in the mean while, a prayer, composed for the purpose, is now actually read every Sunday, besides the usual one in time of war and tumults. Whether I am right in this conjecture I know not; but at all events, I shall write to the Archbishop on the subject, and request him to take the matter into immediate consideration. He is, I believe, at present at Tunbridge Wells. The order must come from the privy council, but is first mentioned to the king by the Archbishop.

I am, dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

B. LONDON.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO CAPTAIN —.

Sandleford, near Newbury, August 31, 1803,

My dear Sir,

I have very lately received from you a letter, dated Cork, and am much affected with the account you give of the lower Irish. The state in which Ireland has been suffered to remain for above a century, is in my mind most disgraceful to the character of this country. We found them barbarous, enslaved by gross superstition, and attached to the enemies of our crown and kingdom, and yet no efforts have been used to convert, civilize, instruct, and attach them. Above all, the non-residence of the clergy till, I believe, of late, when I hope it has been amended, has been such, that there have been extensive districts of country without a resident minister. I am happy, however, to hear that there are now in the church in Ireland many truly active, pious, zealous ministers.

My dear sir, I have much to say to you on naval subjects; I hope that you will carefully observe all that passes. Great as are the services which you may render to your country by defending her against her foreign enemies, yet if you can be instrumental in effecting such an improvement of our naval system as shall gain the affections of our seamen, and, perhaps, permanently improve their character and increase their happiness by rendering them more domestic, you will render a service far greater, and in its consequences more durable. Any man the least acquainted with human nature must know, that to make a crew orderly and obedient you ought to increase their respect for the captain, and try to enlarge his influence and confirm his authority. Yet, from what I hear on all sides, this plain principle has been universally forgotten. I do not wonder that in your last letter (which by the way I have just received) you say you have a long winter to look forward to. May it please God to bless you, and to enable you to discharge your arduous duties to your own satisfaction, and to the benefit of your country.



Your life on shipboard abounds with difficulties and temptations; yet I have often thought that when a man rises in the navy to your rank, or rather so high as to have his cabin to himself, it must be a situation far less unfavourable in a religious view than many others. He may enjoy a good deal of retirement. When he chooses he may lock his door and commune with his own heart in his chamber, and be still. Of all the means of improvement I take prayer to be by far the most effectual, especially when it is accompanied with reading the Scriptures, and praying over them. God has promised in His word that He will give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him—that He will give them wisdom—that He will guide them in the way wherein they should go—and when, relying on His fidelity, we fall on our knees before Him, and pour out our hearts in prayer, claiming His precious promises made to us through Jesus Christ, we are assured that He is more ready to hear us than we are to pray to Him.

I am aware of the danger to which you are exposed from vicious companions; but you must be aware of this. You will of course pray to be protected from it, and to be preserved safe from the contagion of sin. I am sure you will not require an apology for a mark of real friendship which I am going to show you, by mentioning, that when you were last with me, I with pain observed you take the name of God in vain. It may be difficult not to be tainted with this practice, so prevalent, I fear, both in our army and navy; yet I remember Sir Charles Middleton told me he was able to repress the horrid practice of swearing on board the ship he commanded. I should have told you of this at the time, but for my not having a favourable opportunity. O, my dear sir, how shall we in the next world feel obliged to those who in this may have promoted our spiritual well-being, though perhaps at the time we were not fully sensible of the value of the service which was rendered us. Good offices of this kind will last for ever; and I can conceive, that in that future blessed world in which, I doubt not, friends will meet and know each other, and dwell

in the enjoyment of the highest and purest happiness from social intercourse, many will often talk to each other of the obligations they owe to those who, while on earth, were instrumental in helping them forward to heaven, and that mutually to acknowledge these, under circumstances which will make them feel and know the degree of service which has been rendered, will often call forth the affections and warm the hearts of the purified spirits in glory. It should be our endeavour, while we continue in this world, to become more and more qualified to take our place in that blessed society. This is to be effected by our obtaining more and more of the sanctifying influences of God's Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit is to be obtained by earnest, frequent, and persevering prayer, made in the name and for the sake of our blessed Saviour and Intercessor, and by taking great care not to grieve the Holy Spirit, and tempt Him to withdraw from us, by living in the practice of any known sin, or in the neglect of any known duty.

Many would call this a sermon rather than a letter; but in writing to you I pour forth my thoughts as they flow on in their natural course, and I am persuaded you would not have me check them. Before I conclude, let me ask if I can send you any books which will be acceptable to you for your own perusal, and also whether it might do good among the sailors to send you a parcel of religious tracts, &c. mixing the entertaining with the serious (like our excellent friend Mrs. H. More's), to be distributed among them, or whether you want Bibles or Testaments. When you answer this, say, also, how they could be conveyed to you in safety. Farewell, my dear sir.

I am always, with sincere esteem and regard,

Yours sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Near Bath, September 28, 1803.

My dear Muncaster.

I know too well the friendly interest you take in all that concerns me and mine, not to be sure that you are desirous of learning the result of my Bath expedition, and of hearing whether the waters, together with a life of comparative quiet, have healed the wounds and filled up the cracks produced by so long a winter cruise as our last. I certainly have received benefit from our residence at this place already; but I have had a fresh attack of my complaint, which forbids my reckoning too much on any supposed amendment. Fearfully and wonderfully are we made. When we consider the curious and complicated mechanism of our bodily structure, we see reason rather to wonder at its ever continuing to perform its proper functions at all, than to be surprised at its being often out of order. Have you read Paley's *Natural Theology*? To a mind already pious, it will, I hope, be serviceable, by multiplying his recollections of his Supreme Benefactor, by accustoming him to see God in every part of his curious frame, and in all nature around him. But the view of the divine character which is there exhibited is very erroneous and very mischievous. His wisdom, power, and goodness, are indeed enforced by many new proofs, but another grand attribute of the Supreme Being, as He is represented to us in the Scriptures, I mean His justice or His holiness, is entirely overlooked or neglected. The practical consequences of this error are most pernicious: it tends to flatter men into a false estimate of their own character, of the claims of God on them, and therefore of the necessity and value of the Redeemer and Mediator between God and man. How have I been drawn on? I think you will see the train of my ideas.

Letters from London say that government cannot persuade themselves that any attempt will be made on England, but that Ireland will be the subject of the meditated blow. But for the limitation of the number

of volunteers in the very face of all objections, we should ere now have had 700,000 or 800,000 men in arms, or perhaps a million. Still more, the military spirit which would have been diffused would have filled the ranks of the army and caused it to overflow. You have not told me whether you have read a *Cursory View of Parties* by a near Observer. A most abusive, mischievous, and ill-judged pamphlet, which tries to divide at a time when every honest man tries to heal all differences. You must read it. Kind remembrances to Lady Muncaster. Since I came here I have become better acquainted than ever before with my little ones. You will understand and smile at this. Farewell! Believe me, my dear Muncaster,

Ever affectionately yours,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO ZACHARY MACAULAY, ESQ.

Near Bath, September 30, 1803.

My dear Sir,

While I must call you an extravagant fellow for employing the coach instead of the wagon, which latter (the flying wagon, as it is humorously termed) is but three days on the wing, I yet am bound to thank you for your kind attention to my commission.\* It is observed by some writer, that there is in every man a certain vein or thread of shabbiness, which will sometimes show itself in opposition to the general strain of the character. Will you say, that I furnish an illustration of this principle, when I am thus jealous of coach-hire?

Be it as it may, the odd shillings may be better employed than in clogging the wheels and increasing the load of the mail-coach. Call it feeling for the horses, and so dignify my economy. However, I am sure you

\* Mr. Macaulay's commission had been to procure for him "a copy of the last edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*," as a present to a friend.



will not require any apology. I am interrupted, and must break off.

Yours ever affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO CAPTAIN BEDFORD R. N.

Bath, Nov. 5, 1803.

My dear Sir,

Though I have suffered myself too long to defer writing to you, I can truly assure you, that not a day has passed without my thinking of you, and always with an affectionate concern for your comfort and welfare. But so much time is consumed in going twice a-day for the water to and from Bath, and my acquaintance there is so large, that I have been forced to ask a letter of license from many of my correspondents. I call to mind however where you are, and how employed; and this entitles you to priority of attention. If you are in a situation not only solitary, but dangerous; not only estranged from all your friends, but exposed to many enemies; not merely to those whom war compels us to call by that name, but to those natural enemies, if they may be so termed, the manifold dangers and hardships of a winter's cruise . . . if you are subjected to all these evils and risks for the protection of us men of peace and our wives and little ones, we ought to think of you with unceasing affection and gratitude, and endeavour in every way to sweeten your cup and manifest our sense of the obligations we owe you.

I trust, my dear sir, that though I am writing to a sea-officer I may honestly avow that I pant for peace. Alas! that the bad passions of men should produce such a state of things, that the two most enlightened nations on earth . . . possessing more than any others the means of enjoying and diffusing happiness . . . should be respectively straining every nerve in order to aggravate each other's sufferings and accomplish each other's destruction. Oh for that blessed state when the

reign of peace and love shall be complete and universal! With these sentiments and feelings you may be sure that I shall lose no opportunity of promoting the restoration of peace with France. It is much to be regretted that, from pride and other similar passions, nations are always forward to rush into wars, though the bulk of a people soon begin to repent of them and to wish for the termination of hostilities. Ministers of state, on the contrary, are really less prone to get into wars; but when a country is once plunged into them, they are drawn forward by their own schemes; they flatter themselves that they shall by this measure and that, weaken the power of the enemy; and forgetting that the expenditure of blood and treasure is always going on, they seldom are disposed to leave off till they are forced to it. Often also they are afraid lest a less honourable peace than the sanguine expectations of men led them to hope might be obtained, should disgrace their character, and fix on them an imputation of pusillanimity or weakness. They should remember more than they do, that it is the bulk who suffer the evils of war, but that they reap little advantage from its most successful prosecution. How have I been drawn on! Surely if the contents of my letter could be seen it would be ordered to be burned on the quarter-deck. Yet if I mistake not, the friend to whom I write does not greatly disagree with me either in opinions or feelings. \* \* \* \* \*

May every blessing attend you, my dear sir. It is the frequent prayer, I sincerely assure you, of him who is always very truly yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO SIR J. SINCLAIR, BART.

London, December 16, 1803.

My dear Sir John,

You will of course suppose that *quicquid mortaliter evenit*. I must say I have given you reason for such a surmise; but though I could make out a good

defence of myself against the charge of inattention in not sooner answering your most interesting communication, I will not occupy to so little purpose any of your time and my own; suffice it to assure you that my silence has in no degree arisen from inattention.

Your inclosure from America afforded me the highest pleasure; certainly a very different notion has prevailed with regard to the writer's sentiments. We in this island are sadly neglectful of foreigners. I have often thought that a minister would act wisely in employing some competent person (and such an one, though not the product of every market, would be found if proper encouragement were held out, for in men as in manufactures the supply accommodates itself to the demand,) to study our relations and points of contact with foreign countries, their leading characteristics, &c., and to suggest the proper measures and expedients for conciliating or otherwise influencing, as the case might require. The ignorance of foreign countries, their chief men, their opinions, manners, prejudices, &c. is beyond measure great; and would be astonishing to any who, not having had the opportunity, like you and I, of personal observation, are not aware that nothing, or at least little else, is attended to, but that which is made the subject of discussion in parliament. This is one of the bad effects of our most excellent constitution. Your correspondent's letter led me into this train of thinking. Our statesmen would do well to cultivate the good will of America; her friendship may be eminently beneficial to us.

We will talk about Ireland when we meet. Such an inquiry as that which you suggest would supply the only sound and sure grounds for future measures. But I fear the general prejudices against its being conducted by parliamentary commissioners would be insuperable; but if so, why should not a company of private individuals set on foot the investigation? Would it be impracticable to procure such a statistical account of Ireland as that which you have furnished of Scotland, superadding certain classes of topics on which it would

be necessary, for our object, to obtain information. How strange it is, yet it is undeniably true, that we know the state of Ireland less authentically than that of almost any country in Europe. I was assured three years ago by the best informed man in Irish affairs that I know, that A. Young's travels were even now the best storehouses of Irish information. Do turn this in your mind. You have shown that little obstacles do not stop you; you cannot take a course where your labours are more called for, or would be more useful. I have often thought of accompanying any other measures with one founded on the policy of three of the greatest characters of English history, Queen Elizabeth, Oliver Cromwell, and William III. I would annually apply the sum of a million sterling to the office of settling a certain number of a particular description of the Irish in Canada, or some other country, with their own consent. The mere suggestion of this kind will bring before you the train of ideas which follows. My paper admonishes me to conclude, and I remain,

My dear Sir John,

Your faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I thought I might mention to Mr. Pitt the contents of your letter from America. He was of course much pleased with it.

We are all in high spirits from Lord Moira's compliment to your Edinburgh volunteers; and though I suppose somewhat must be abated in consideration of its being addressed to themselves, whom we would naturally wish to animate, yet it really weighs heavily even in a hydrostatical balance.



## DEAN OF CARLISLE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Queen's College, Epiphany, 1804.

My dear Friend,

I cannot help giving you a line upon having received yours this morning, and plainly perceiving from the contents that you must have had a deal of concern on your mind again.

Alas! alas! this poor dear little one, that looks so like your deceased mother. May I really hope the worst is over! It is the most affecting thing in the world to see a child one loves ill; and I find it impossible not to love these little ones, if I live with them and see their pretty ways of going on. Yet what a deal of art, and sometimes not of amiable art do they show! But then they overpower one absolutely by their thousand little affectionate tricks and looks. Depend on it there is a superintending Providence that peculiarly guards them.

Edwards\* is, indeed, a deep hand. There is a world of thinking sometimes in a few pages. I studied that book on affections long ago with very great care, and wrote a few notes on some passages where I thought him not so clear as usual, or perhaps where I do not quite agree with him, which in general I do very much. To live the life of faith is the thing after all; and a hard matter it is.

My poor heart is fuller than any body knows on earth. I am sadly dissatisfied and sadly hampered; I know not where to turn or what to say; but it is not from want but from abundance of matter. I have been trying plans that are new in some respects to me. I mean practical plans. What will be the result I know not. I am not without hope; but this is all I can say. One thing I can add, I have the fullest conviction of the way; I see it as if marked with a sunbeam—blessed be God! Moreover I find, that whenever I can act for

\* Edwards on Religious Affections.

even a short time in any measure up to the principles which I know to be right, I succeed so far.

There is, indeed, a secret in religion, and this secret is with them that fear Him.

Every doubt about knotty points vanishes in proportion as I have a disposition to be active, and as I support a real practical life of faith.

I preached on Christmas-day in our chapel, and got a good deal of cold.

Yours affectionately,

ISAAC MILNER.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO WILLIAM GRAY, ESQ.

Broomfield, January 9, 1804.

My dear Sir,

My silence has really not arisen from my being in any degree indifferent to the subject of your letter, which, from the account which it gave of the family you mention, would of itself have interested me, had I not been before disposed to feel towards them the genuine emotions of friendship. I rejoice in learning from your letter that they are making a progress in the best direction. Alas! my dear Sir, how difficult it is to do this—how *natural* to us are declensions—how laborious, how difficult is it to advance or even to keep our station! It is the discovery of this by painful experience which tends to produce in us a deep humility, a sense of our own weakness, and a practical acquaintance with our Almighty Saviour. It is highly gratifying to see an undeniable improvement in our older friends—to see that period of life wherein we naturally begin to sicken of the business and bustle of that world, allotted to its best use, the preparing for that future state which is at hand. Yet it is still more delightful to witness the manifest marks of the Divine hand in those who are still in the bloom of youth, entering perhaps into life, and likely to serve God and their fellow-creatures

with the full unimpaired vigour of their faculties, and to devote a whole life to his service.

We may indulge this pleasing prospect in the case of several young men who are now entering into the world, and it is one of the very best and most encouraging symptoms in the case of our body politic, that it has pleased God to give us such highly favoured instruments, which I hope we may justly construe into an assurance that He has not yet cast us off as a nation, justly as we have provoked His displeasure by our past ingratitude, and profane levity, and self-sufficiency.

In respect to the particular instance in which our friends wish for my good offices, I can only state what I have often had occasion to communicate to particular friends since I have held my parliamentary situation, viz., that my principle in using any influence I may possess in the disposal of ecclesiastical preferment, is, to exert it so as, in my judgment, to do the most good to the souls of men. This is a short way of putting it, but it includes all the rest. I am bound by it to espouse the cause of the minister, whoever he may be, whom I believe likely to be the most extensively useful, and not to suffer the temporal interests of a single individual, and still less my own personal affections, to be weighed against the eternal interests of many.

These, my dear Sir, are principles of conduct of which I shall not be ashamed to give account in the hour of death and at the day of judgment, and no others will then stand the test. They have often, however, been the occasion of my suffering no little pain, because they have compelled me to refuse the requests of those whom I have tenderly loved—of those to whom I have felt myself bound by the ties of gratitude. But while our friends will themselves feel the force of these principles, I trust they need not oblige me to dismiss the hope of some time or other being the instrument of promoting their wishes, not most likely by obtaining this particular preferment, but possibly some other. I am grieved, however, to state that I find very strong prejudices in the minds of the generality of those who possess, or

who are likely to possess the great ecclesiastical patronage of the country ; but God can take care of His own church, and as it has pleased Him of late to raise up many labourers, so I would humbly trust that He will provide for them admission and the means of usefulness. Let all our prayers be poured out for this with increasing earnestness. It is painful to be supposed hostile to that church we most tenderly and solicitously love ; but such has been the lot of better men than ourselves, of those whose love has burned with a brighter and purer flame.

I must finish this long letter which I have been forced to write by snatches. You are indebted for its being concluded to-day to my waiting for a friend with whom I have business. With kind regards to all your own household, I remain always,

Yours very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. HANNAH MORE.

Broomfield, February 21, 1804.

My dear Friend,

Though I have not written to you, you have often been in our thoughts and mouths. We heard with concern of your having suffered much pain:—Baxter pathetically exclaims, “ After all I must say, Ah, this vile body ! ” It is, however, an unspeakable consolation under all trials of every sort to reflect, that they do not happen by chance, nor merely from the effect of general laws which, in their gigantic rotations, crush a few thousands more or less of the insignificant beings who chance to be under them : such a way of talking about general laws is a most saddening system, and of an atheistical complexion, though many have embraced it who have been the farthest in the world from atheism. How much more healing is it to consider that all which befalls is specifically and individually ordained for us by Him who combines infinite goodness with Almighty wisdom



and power, who afflicts not His creatures needlessly, much less those who fear and love Him, and wait on Him, and who has assured us that all shall finally work together for our good. I shall not apologize for pouring forth to you all this common-place stuff. In truth it is those common-place positions that are one's daily bread—one's support and comfort.

How we are again and again reminded and awakened to seriousness. If all fails of its purpose, as there is much cause to fear it will, I almost tremble for the issue. Such formidable preparations without, and levity and presumption so much more formidable within, make me fear lest God should resolve to chastise us severely by that scourge which has before been used for the purposes of his vengeance. Have you seen Hall's sermon?—it is a most powerful composition.

I am to bring on again the question of Abolition, and I hear the West Indians themselves begin at length to be alarmed, and—confessedly, from considerations of interest—mean to consent to a suspension of the Slave trade for five years. I can, of course, agree to no such compromise, but I shall rejoice in Africa's having such a breathing time. *Entre nous*, I am engaged in scribbling a tract to be circulated among the members of the House of Commons before the question comes on. Alas! the tales of horror, which once caused so many tears to flow, are all forgotten! I am grown to think that sensibility is one of the most cruel of all qualities.

I was pleased to hear of the Royal sympathy—it really was a promising trait. Alas, poor king!—yet I do believe, that never monarch was more sincerely regretted. He has been very ill, in every way, but there is every reason to hope he is recovering; but surely the reasoning powers must feel the effects of these rude conflicts. Did you hear of \* \* \*? Well, my friend, let us pray for them, and be thankful for not having been placed in so dangerous a situation. I will inclose the half of a 50*l.* bank note as usual for the schools. If you are in occasional want of a little more at present I could supply it, which I tell you

frankly, meaning, of course, that you should treat me frankly. I well know how considerate you are for me; but, somehow, Providence is very kind to me, and I find myself better off in this world's goods than I thought I was, though all this is too little for the misery that abounds. Once more, may God preserve and comfort you, and prepare you for all the chances and changes you may have to witness. With kind remembrances, in which Mrs. W., when I tell her I am writing, will most cordially join, to all the ladies.

I am, my dear friend,

Yours ever,

W. WILBERFORCE.

LORD MUNCASTER TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

April 11, 1804.

My last letters from town tell me that Pitt means to come forth in the most decisive manner; if he does so, I think the Treasury bench will not stand the second shaking, or very little more will make it sink down; and I am quite alarmed at what is also assured me, that the king is really not much better. If this be verily so, some steps should be taken that there may not be an interruption to the activity of the executive government in case the expected attack takes place, and which cannot now be delayed I should conceive many days even. The Indian wants have operated differently upon my mind and feelings from what I conceive they have done upon all in garrison; and I have endeavoured to trace out the shades of difference between what is acting against us in Europe, and what we are acting against the native powers in Asia. Alas, alas! what is man—how high, how low; how rich, how poor; how abject, how august; how complicate, how wonderful; how passing wonder He who made him such—who centered in our make such wide extremes.

Have you seen the correspondence of Col. Wood with government in the years '96 and '98. It does not put

the conduct of the latter in a happy point of view on account of any great statesman-like qualities among those who directed things at that period. *Apropos*, I have lately had communicated to me, and from excellent authority, a very important anecdote respecting Dundas (tell me when I have mentioned it if it ever reached you), that the battle of Marengo is very much indeed to be put down to Dundas's extraordinary partiality for the late Sir Ralph Abercrombie; for he gave him the command of that force which was afterwards sent to Egypt. To do this, he superseded Sir C. Stewart, and changed the object and direction of that force, which was Genoa, in order to relieve Melas, that he might more immediately have met the first consul on his descending from the defiles of the Alps, when he might have attacked him with, humanly speaking, certain success; but Dundas's manœuvre for Abercrombie lost so much time, that the expedition was delayed beyond the moment when it could be of service, and Buonaparte had time to arrange himself properly before Melas could leave Genoa and meet him; and upon this it was, that that force was afterwards sent to Egypt. Sir Charles was so hurt that he sent Dundas his letter back again that superseded him in the command. What trifles the most important matters of this world turn upon!—how humbling!!!

Adieu. Our best regards.

Ever, ever yours,  
MUNCASTER.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Broomfield, May 1, 1804.

My dear Muncaster,

You would not perhaps scold me, but I should really reproach myself, if I were not to send you a few words, though they must be but a few, on the present state of politics and parties. My wish has been that Pitt might consent to unite with several of the present ad-

ministration, and especially with Addington himself. Grieved indeed am I to say, when I call to mind their former long and intimate friendship, that a sad degree of hostility has taken possession of both their bosoms, and chiefly, I fear, of that which, belonging to the strongest character of the two, was likely to partake of that strength. Still, you will anticipate all I could say to you, of the fatal consequences which might follow from the King's being in his present state compelled to receive into his Cabinet an administration, consisting entirely of men who had forced themselves against his will into his service, and containing some persons who were naturally the objects of his extreme aversion. For my own part I confess, what I believe you know, Fox is not so obnoxious to me as some of Pitt's own connections; but I fear the country in general would misconstrue their being united in an administration formed, as this would be, from the effects of their joint opposition. Pitt's character would suffer, and if so the loss might be irreparable.

The newspapers will tell you what passed in the two Houses. I may add—in confidence, till it be otherwise known—that a private intimation had been made to the General,\* as you used to call him, through an old legal friend of ours, that either he would be sent for, or that a negotiation would be opened with him, through that same legal friend. I have myself (this most strictly *entre nous*) had some conversation with that legal friend, and his sentiments and language do him the highest honour. He really in the main exactly concurs with me in wishes and opinions, as to what is best, both for the country and for the General himself.

I am staying to-day in the country, enjoying the first greetings of summer—the nightingales are abundant, and, my dear friend, while through nature I look up to nature's God, and still more when, from regarding the Author of all nature, I further contemplate Him in the still more endearing character of the God of grace

\* Mr. Pitt.



and consolation, my heart is warmed and thankful for the unequalled blessings I enjoy. I look down with unaffected superiority on the contentious sparrings of our political parties. Happy they who pursue those paths which even here are alone paths of peace, though pleasantness may sometimes (precarious pleasantness) be found in other ways, and which alone will at length conduct us to permanent and solid happiness. O my dear Muncaster, press forward in these ways.—The Scriptures, prayer, with humble reliance on our Redeemer and Intercessor, and on the aids of His promised Spirit, these are the sure means of progress.

With kind remembrances,

I am ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

(Private.) Broomfield, May 10, 1804.

My dear Muncaster,

As you may like to receive a little private intelligence, I would not omit or delay writing. A look from a friend is better than nothing.

You will be glad to hear that during an interview of more than three hours which Pitt had with the King, the latter treated him with great cordiality and even affection, and talked with as much rationality and propriety as at any former period of his life. Before Pitt supported Fox's motion, he wrote the King a private letter intimating that he felt himself under the painful necessity of opposing his Majesty's government, from a firm conviction that his doing so was indispensable to the national safety and honour, &c. He also afterwards by the King's desire submitted to him his general ideas of the sort of administration which it would be best to form in the present conjuncture: viz. an administration composed of the heads of all the several great political parties; grounding this opinion on the probability of a long war, and the advantages of a strong government at home,

abroad, and in Ireland. A few days afterwards he saw the King, and again explained and enforced as far as he properly could the same ideas. The King objected a good deal at first to the Grenvilles, but at length gave way very handsomely, but indicated such a decided determination against Fox, that it would have been wrong to press it further.

The Grenvilles, as you hear, say they cannot accept office without Fox and Co.; and so Pitt is to come in with his own personal friends, Lord Harrowby, &c. and with some of the present men. The country in general I am persuaded will like this best, though the old opposition partisans will be enraged. And though Pitt had most clearly explained from the first, that Fox and Co. were not to consider him bound in any degree directly or indirectly to press their admission into office, and that they were therefore not to shape their conduct on any such supposition, yet I see clearly Pitt will be abused. You cannot think how violent S. is. He is loud too that the government cannot *stand at all*. Surely he might have formed some estimate of Pitt's powers. The Carlton House politics I hear are all in favour of Fox. Pitt of course would have taken any of the Prince's friends.

I am not sure that this arrangement is not the very best possible; the Grenvilles are so wrong-headed and warlike. Surely, except with a view to the heir apparent, they are wrong in uniting themselves with people to whose political opinions their own are decidedly opposite in almost all important particulars. Farewell.

Yours ever,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Broomfield, June 4, 1804.

My dear Muncaster,

Though on all sides, and in all directions, letters are lying around me unanswered, and many of them unread, I must, before I proceed to the liquidation of the

vast debt which for above a week has been accumulating, and with many sadly and justly clamorous creditors—I must send you a line or two. Indeed you must have been surprised (I hope not hurt) at my not having written the day after our carrying the first bastion of the Slave Trade citadel; a citadel, the dungeon of which is more foul, dark, and cruel, and containing a far greater number of poor wretched victims of injustice and oppression, than any of Tippoo's Hill Forts, formerly so much talked of. I can assure you my heart was with you (and Burgh also) from the moment of our victory. But, my dear Muncaster, you will enter into my sensations. I could not, I cannot feel any thing of the joys of success, when I know how little we can depend on the continuance of our first advantages, even in the House of Commons, and still more when I look forward to the House of Lords. But on this subject so much pours in upon me, that I must let down the flood-gates, and not permit another drop to come through, except that, though you will be sufficiently indignant against Addington from reading the account of his speechling, (it lasted literally but for about forty seconds,) yet you would be ten times more indignant if you knew all. I have the satisfaction of reflecting that I acted towards him, in spite of much provocation, like a true friend. I had endeavoured to procure for him, or rather to put him in the way of procuring for himself, the credit of effecting a suspension of the Slave Trade for five years, (while we should have been stigmatized as speculative visionaries, he, on the contrary, being the man of practical humanity, &c.) To all this, no answer, no hint of what he thought or intended, &c. At last he comes with his wretched repetition of our mode being impracticable. I own I never felt more indignant. But what am I doing? my sheet nearly done, and not one word except on that subject on which I meant to say but three. I will close it, telling you that the Historical Sketches\* have produced a powerful impression on my mind, on a re-perusal.

\* Historical Sketches on the Slave Trade, by Lord Muncaster.

It is most true that you *never* hear *one* word about invasion, any more than of death or of the day of judgment. Your inference is most just. O Muncaster, Muncaster, I used often to tell you that you thought too highly of one person's talents, of whom, both in point of talents and some moral qualities, I also thought, and still think, more highly than of those of almost any other man. But, as I have often said, 'he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he.' True religion, which makes a man 'keep his own heart diligently,' to use the Scripture expression, gives him a further insight into the hearts of others, and enables him to anticipate conduct and events far better than many superior to him in natural sagacity and acquired knowledge. 'Fear God and keep His commandments, that is the whole duty of man.' I more and more see the truth and force of the proposition.

Have you seen Bates's Moral Philosophy, or Hall's last fast sermon, "The Sentiments proper to the Crisis." I had nearly forgotten a piece of business on which I have had to write to you for a month past. A friend of mine and Grant's, Mr. Parry, is about to go to the Lakes with his wife and a little girl or two. He is an East India director, a man of practical sense, great piety and benevolence, whom you must love on account of his being incessantly active in works of kindness, &c.—his wife, one of my sister's oldest friends. In one word, I am much interested for them, and desirous of their having every advantage towards a comfortable tour. Let me beg you to allow me to introduce them to you.

I must stop—farewell. Kind remembrances.

Yours ever,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. Alas! at the very time I am writing I am expecting to hear of Poor Dick Milnes's death. O my friend, let us be ready. And this reminds me that I had forgot to tell you one circumstance in which you and Mr. Parry are alike; he lost his only son lately, a youth of the utmost promise.



REV. JOHN NEWTON TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

June 5, 1804.

Though I can scarcely see the paper before me, I must attempt to express my thankfulness to the Lord, and to offer my congratulations to you for the success which He has so far been pleased to give to your unwearied endeavours for the abolition of the slave trade, which I have considered as a millstone, sufficient, of itself sufficient, to sink such an enlightened and highly favoured nation as ours to the bottom of the sea.

My thoughts upon the subject have long been gloomy, for I was afraid the mistaken prejudice of the West-India planters would prove an insuperable obstacle; but I have a new proof now of what I always professed to believe, that to prayer, faith, and patient perseverance, all things are possible.

Whether I who am within two months of entering my eightieth year shall live to see the accomplishment of the work, is only known to Him, in whose hands are all our times and ways, but the hopeful prospect of its accomplishment will, I trust, give me daily satisfaction so long as my declining faculties are preserved.

How I long to see you, my dear Mrs. Wilberforce, and your children, but I am 'Miles Emeritus,' and could not reach Broomfield, even if I was sure of finding you at home; but I am often with you in spirit, and I am enabled to hope, that vile and worthless as I always was, and still am, I shall one day meet you before the throne of glory, and join you in songs of praises to Him who loved us, and gave himself for us.

I must leave off;—my eyes fail. May the grace of our God and Saviour be with us all. I am, with much respect and gratitude,

Your affectionate and obliged

JOHN NEWTON.

## LORD GRENVILLE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Camelford House, June 27, 1804.

My dear Sir,

Immediately on the receipt of your note of yesterday I wrote to Lord Harrowby to mention that I had not been aware how soon we were likely to have the Abolition Bill in the House of Lords, and that I was extremely desirous of conversing with him, and learning his sentiments on the course to be pursued on the subject. I saw him this morning, and I think he is disposed to take the management of the business into his own hands, which will, I really believe, be much more advantageous for the question than if I were to undertake this task. He will probably have apprized you, either directly, or through Pitt, of the course which I mentioned to him, as appearing to me to be, on the whole, the most conducive to ultimate success: but I told him at the same time with great sincerity, that he might rely on my utmost endeavours and exertions of every kind in any more rapid mode of proceeding, that on consultation with Pitt and you might be deemed practicable. I am to see him to-morrow morning, when I shall probably learn what has been determined; I had fixed to leave town to-morrow morning for the summer, but I have delayed my journey till Friday, in the hope that the first reading of the bill to-morrow will afford me an opportunity of expressing my unalterable adherence to the opinions I have entertained on this subject, ever since I was capable of thinking upon it, and my resolution of giving any assistance in my power to that course, whatever it may be, that the friends of the question shall on the whole deem most expedient. But though I mention the plan I had laid down for myself, I beg you to be persuaded that no arrangement, either of business or pleasure, will prevent my considering it my first object to give my attendance in every stage in which it can be of the least use in this question: and that, although I do most truly and unaffectedly think that the conduct of the bill will be much more advantageously placed in

Lord Harrowby's hands than in mine, yet this sentiment is totally unmixed with any desire of declining any part or share in the business in which yourself, or those who partake in your feelings upon it, think I can be useful. I am truly gratified by the kindness of your letter. The accidents that have interrupted the intimate habits of our early life have produced no variation in my sentiment towards you; and the uniformity of our opinions on the great and leading points to which you refer, forms a bond of mutual regard which I trust and I hope will be as lasting as its principle is solid and secure.

Ever most affectionately and  
faithfully yours,  
G.

DEAN OF CARLISLE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Deanery, Carlisle, July 25, 1804.

My dear friend,

It may not be amiss that you should know I wrote yesterday to —

1. I urged the principle on which you had invariably acted, viz., independence in parliament; and that he who himself acted so disinterestedly knew how to appreciate such a principle; and also, that there was only one way of preserving it, viz., not laying yourself under any obligations to any administration whatever.

2. That in regard to ecclesiastic patronage you had a conscience to attend to; that you had taken pains to inform yourself in religious matters; and did not dare to be instrumental in preferring indifferent characters, &c., (I expressed myself as *suaviter* as I could); that you were strictly a Church of England man; and that though some would deride your principle, and call it hypocrisy, and many think loosely about it, and very few give it its due weight, you could not possibly act otherwise with a good conscience; that, as a tried man,

there was now no ostentation in avowing your principle:—

3. I then said that if I were examined on oath I could say, that the adhering to this principle had cost you great pain, and that you had often done violence to your feelings in cases where relations and best friends, &c. had claims.

4. That he stood foremost as your county friend: that he had gained your heart not only by real services, but by his handsome, frank manner; that on this head I could speak with unqualified certainty, having formed my judgment from what had often dropped in most undisguised moments during many years.

5. That as I know not his brother, I could say nothing of the event, but was sure, if you could not serve him, you would be exceedingly hurt, and infinitely more, if you could believe he deemed you ungrateful.

6. I then advised him to open himself completely to you; to state his claims, and to give the real character of his brother; still, to let his letter be such as you could show to Mr. Pitt if you thought proper, and he might say any thing that ought to be quite private on another paper.

I have revolved the matter a good deal, and I really do not see but that you are in your duty by doing so much: farther I think you cannot. I see nothing wrong in your showing Mr. Pitt his application to you; and for that reason I also inclose you again his letter to me, as that would show Mr. Pitt the way in which he began this application.

N. B. Your military applicant, whom you desired me to inquire about, is, I find, an indifferent character. He is a strolling player, and has left Carlisle.

Yours, ever affectionately,

J. M.



W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO CAPTAIN — , R. N

(His Majesty's Ship ——— off Brest.)

Broomfield, July 30, 1804.

My dear Sir,

As you are so kind as to receive pleasure from my letters, it would hurt me to appear tardy in contributing to your gratification, at a time especially and under circumstances in which you have so much to bear that is of a contrary quality. You are, however, in the path of duty—you are on your post. I use the phrase, as you will accept it, in a higher sense than that which many in your profession would assign to it. Life has often been compared to a journey, and viewing it in that character, I trust you and I are travelling to the same place, though by different tracks. O, my dear sir, how strange it is that men in general should be so insensible to this most interesting of all considerations! Were any of your comrades to be engaged in an enterprize of the most critical and important nature, which, at the termination of a voyage of uncertain length, was to be productive to them either of lasting wretchedness and infamy, or of durable wealth, and ease, and glory, would they not often talk of the interesting issue? Yet we are all sailing down the stream of life, in a treacherous current too, and one and another going down continually in sight to remind us of our danger, and not a word is spoken—not a thought seems to be bestowed on it. Let us, my dear sir, so number our days, as to apply our hearts unto wisdom. I know not how it happens, but in writing to you, the natural flow of my thoughts always leads me to serious topics. I trust, however, that I need not apologize for this unusual strain; it is a proof that I write to you with the frankness of real regard.

Let me beg you to continue your communications; and I beg also that you will let me know when you want any thing which I can furnish or procure. Do you want more books or tracts? I have long had in view

the institution of a plan, on a large scale, of education for the children of seamen who had been many years in His Majesty's service, and I will frankly own to you that, having sometime ago mentioned this, but in vain, I have seen the establishment for soldier's children set on foot with the more pleasure, because, besides its own intrinsic merit, it would be likely to render it impossible for government to refuse to befriend a similar plan for our naval defenders also. There are some subjects connected with your profession, on which I shall be very glad to talk with you when we have opportunity, and one of the foremost of them is the best means of redressing any grievances of seamen, and of gaining their affection. I must break off. I have a pile of unanswered letters at my elbow, and therefore it has been an effort to finish this, though it may appear so tardy in its arrival. Believe me, ever with cordial esteem and regard,

My dear sir,

Yours very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO RIGHT HON. W. PITT, ESQ.

Lyme, September 14, 1804.

My dear Pitt,

On the day when, in consequence of your suggestion, I called at Lord Camden's office, both he and Cooke were absent. Mr. G. Penn was so obliging as to show me a few of the papers, but the chief of them were taken away by Sullivan to be corrected, or were copying. I, therefore, can form no just judgment of the plan under discussion. But I own if it be what was proposed formerly by Sir Joseph Banks, I fear it is very questionable in its principle, and very hazardous in the execution. I have, however, requested Lord Camden, by letter to send me a copy of the plan, and I will consider it impartially and seriously. I am very desirous of seeing it. Lord Camden has mentioned to me another

part of the scheme, that of buying slaves for recruiting our black regiments. That their situation as soldiers would be beyond comparison preferable to that of plantation slaves cannot be doubted; but how can we justify buying slaves for that desirable and even humane purpose, when we reflect that the increased demand will produce a proportionately increased supply, and consequently as many more marauding expeditions, acts of individual rapine, injustice, witchcraft, and condemnations, &c., as are necessary for obtaining the requisite number of negroes.

It has occurred to me as extremely probable that Buonaparte will resort to this mode of obtaining a black army for the reduction of St. Domingo, and I should be sorry that we should set him the example. The *vicious principle*, however, constitutes the main objection to this system of recruiting, and I know not how it can be got over. All that I can desire is, that you will give so much of your attention to the subject as to enable you to form a judgment, both on this last scheme and on the main plan, of which I understand it to be a part; I am sure you and I cannot differ in principle; and if you will therefore look into the matter as you really ought (because it will come hereafter into discussion if it be adopted, and you will be regarded as the responsible person), I shall be content. I should be much obliged to you at any time for a single word to satisfy my anxiety on this subject.

Secondly, you received, I hope, the two papers which Mr. Brougham desired me to give you, the one, a manuscript statement, which the whole number (several hundreds,) of respectable persons in Edinburgh who meant to form a volunteer corps, but were neglected as they thought by Lord Hobart, desired might be laid before you, being solicitous that you, to whom they were devoted (remember this was some time before you were in office), might know that their not coming forward had not proceeded from any defect in their zeal or loyalty. The other of Mr. Brougham's papers was a cri-

tique on Lord Lauderdale's late work on National Wealth, and on Lord Chatham's Letters.

Thirdly, you also got, I hope, the Book of Exercises of the Students in Lord Wellesley's college in Calcutta, which the college desired might be presented to his Majesty. They did me the honour (owing, I believe, to my knowing well one of the chief officers of the college,) to ask me to present it, adding, that if I declined, they wished me to give it to Mr. Addington, then prime minister, to be presented to his Majesty by him. From what I know of them, I am sure that *your* presenting it will be more conformable to their wishes. Only don't forget it, and let me be authorised by you to report that it was graciously received.

Fourthly, I fear the queries for the West Indies will be forgot; but they had better be sent.

Fifthly, and last, not least, let me beg you, my dear Pitt, to have the proclamation issued for stopping the Guiana supply of slaves. If I felt less on that subject, I should say more: but I really do feel on it very deeply, and so I know you would also, if your attention were not absorbed by such a number of pressing matters: but it will not cost you half an hour I hope to settle this. I beg you will remember how much I myself am personally concerned in it, if any other excuse be necessary for my boring you so about it than the merits of the subject itself. I cannot doubt that —, and others of his set in abolition matters, will renew the attack they formerly made on me, on account of my not having endeavoured to stop this supply of slaves to the conquered settlements. I trust, however, that I need not assure you that the thing itself, far more than what any one can say on it, weighs on my mind. I repeat it, half an hour would settle the whole—the forms are at hand in the Council Office.

Sixthly, I cannot help saying a word or two on a subject on which I have thought, at least daily for many months—that I mean of the Volunteer command. Surely you will not, if there should be any landing, take your station as colonel of the corps, but remember that you



are the mainspring of the whole machine, and there is a reason peculiar to the times or the persons in certain high situations, which renders it indispensable, both on grounds of duty and character, that you should be in a station from which you can issue general orders, applicable to all the parts of the complicated system of measures. You naturally do not hear much concerning the commander-in-chief, but I do not believe people think of him half so well as he deserves. Their chief reason for not being much more discontented than they are, and still more than they avow themselves to be, is, that they believe if any thing serious really were to happen, *you* would sit in counsel with him, and they give him credit for a disposition to follow your advice. Let me beg you to destroy this, which I am sure you will ascribe to its true motives, regard for the public interest, and personally for yourself.

I am ever,

My dear P.,

Affectionately and sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I like this place extremely. The climate suits me; and the bold coast, and opportunities either of fresh air or shelter, are most delectable.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Lyme, September 15, 1804.

My dear Friend,

If I were to say that I had a thousand times thought of writing to you, I might be liable to the reproach you incurred from your Quaker friend, "Friend, didst thou count them?" but I should not so readily give up my assertion as an exaggeration. I had once, also, at least, actually begun a letter to you; but my residence at Broomfield, even after the rising of Parliament, was one incessant hurry. I am now come with my whole family to a place where I hope to enjoy some-

thing of (to me) the greatest of all luxuries, as well as the best of all medicines—quiet. Already I have had one or two delectable strolls with a Testament, a Psalter, or a Cowper in my pocket (you won't resent my classification); and after I shall have fought through a host of letters, which are drawn up in array against me, but over which I have resolved to assign you the precedence, and have completed another task, which, as being connected with Abolition, naturally devolves on me, I hope to enjoy many a delightful walk along the hoarse resounding shore, meditating on better things than poor blind Homer knew or sung of—*excepto quod non simul esses cætera lætus*. I wish you were here, we might then see something of you; though I find myself thinking and ready to say this to so many friends whom I love, that my wish, if realized, would utterly destroy my quiet, though it would so much mend my society.

Now, to what has been floating before my mind's eye from the first moment of my taking up my pen—your manuscript,\* it really will do you credit, which is saying much; but it is also pronouncing on another topic, on which I will more unequivocally say, that you must not think of concealing your name, though it need not stare in the title-page. May God bless it to its best uses! The object is of the very highest importance, and deserves most serious attention. I should be glad to see it again, and would read it more attentively than I have yet done, or, rather, more uninterruptedly; for I did attend to it closely enough when I could get to it. I really am amazed at your memory, knowing that you cannot have looked of late years into the "Memoirs, Histories," &c., of which you speak. I understood you were to have Mr. Knox with you; if you have an opportunity, assure him with rather more truth than the words commonly imply, of my high consideration and friendly esteem. I should enjoy a few hours' chat with him. But tell him, we have either spoiled his noble friend, or he came spoiled to our hands. I have been,

\* The Hints to a Princess.

I own, sadly disappointed in him, having expected great and even good things from him, on Mr. Knox's, with me, high authority. I respect his talents, however, and his manners are quite captivating. His value as a man of business is not yet known in the House of Commons.

This is a place much to my mind in some respects ; whether, with a mild climate, it is as damp as Devonshire, its near neighbour, generally is, remains to be proved. If it be, it wont suit my constitution. I begin writing one word for another ; and having been at my desk till I cannot breathe without a pumping, I must finish. Every blessing attend you.

Kind remembrances, in which Mrs. W. would join if she knew of my writing. Farewell.

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Monday, September 17, 1804.

“ Cuilibet in sua arte credendum.”

My dear Wilberforce,

During a naval action, a seaman carried down to the cockpit a comrade who had fallen insensible on the deck:—“ Why do you bring me a dead man ?” cried the surgeon. “ Carry him up, and throw him overboard.” The bearer obeyed ; but as he reached the top of the ladder, his burthen, who had only been stunned with the wind of a ball, revived : and perceiving his purpose, exclaimed, “ Alas ! messmate, I am not dead.” “ Hold your tongue, you lying rascal,” rejoined the other ; “ who should know best, you, or the doctor ?” so chucked him over the side.

It may, perhaps, be thought by the unlearned, that the maxim above cited has been a little overstrained in the application. In my case, however, about which you

kindly inquire in a letter just received by Mrs. Stephen, I dare not so far outrage all those devotees of precedence and authority, the pattern of whose wigs I unworthily wear, as not to trust to my surgeon. It is true that since he said my limb was almost well, it has given me more pain than ever, and that to the eyes of the unlearned it appears just as bad as it did a fortnight ago; but he persisted on Friday that it was healing, though in a very cross-grained manner, and therefore I am bound to believe that it is now more than almost well.

To be serious, I do believe, or at least hope, it is going on well, though at a pace at which it would be distanced by the slowest snail in the kingdom. But to say the truth, I hope it is only because its tricks are so strange and fantastic that I can form no consistent theory of my own to account for them, and therefore hold by the doctor. Alas, my writing!—though I assure you I am serious, and seriously afflicted, I really cannot work: I sleep and I grow fat; and you see I can laugh; but my body, and what is worse, my mind, are very heavy and languid. I was never so animalized in my life, nor so unable to heave myself out of that state. But here are *P*'s enough to nauseate ego Erskine himself, and yet *I* must add that *I* am with most affectionate feelings for you and yours,

J. STEPHEN.

DEAN OF CARLISLE, TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Queen's College, September 24, 1804.

My very dear Friend,

Here am I again (after receiving many mercies) and pretty much in my usual plight—troubled a good deal. You are in a sweet place: I am sorry you find yourself always so much in a hurry, and always so oppressed with business. Without great care I find myself getting into that way, so as to be always in a bustle, and with me, when this is given way to, nothing serious can thrive. I believe you have more command of yourself; but take care, and do not encroach on the time



which ought to be allotted to quiet meditation. Of how very little moment will the world and all its concerns appear to be by and by, and how bitterly shall we lament that we had not squeezed out more time for religious improvement! Take notice, there is such a thing as giving way repeatedly, and for a long time, to a bad habit, till we become, in a measure, satisfied that resistance and amendment are impossible. If we don't mind, we are apt to mistake the struggles of conscience, and the pain which it costs us to stifle a sense of duty, for a laudable striving to acquit ourselves well in the race we have to run. But God is not mocked! He watches whether some sort of secret selfishness is not the motive at the bottom.

Thus is it easy to talk, and even in the pulpit. This summer, in spite of infirmities and a fortnight's illness, I have been enabled to preach ten times in great churches at Carlisle and its neighbourhood; and I may add, with very great apparent success. I mentioned my being enabled to get through these things (though with great bodily inconvenience) as something surprising and even paradoxical when the state of my mind is considered. I know not how it is; in one word, I have no confidence towards God, and of late have been very much beset with lamentable temptations. God knows I have for a long time taken considerable pains in self-examination to find out where it is that I particularly offend, as I feel assured this must be the case, or I should not experience what I do; or is it that I have been so long and grievous an offender against light and knowledge, that it is not fit for such a rebel to be treated like a good subject? I remember telling my poor brother once, when I was in considerable affliction of mind, "That notwithstanding my many sins and obdurate state, still I was well convinced that there did not exist any one earthly improper object that I was secretly and knowingly wishing for, which might be displeasing to a gracious God, and prevent His smiles; and most truly after years of examination I can honestly say the same; but still, I fear, the case is bad; and I sus-

pect it to be in this way,—I do not give myself up wholly to God,—with every power and every nerve, thought, word, deed,—to be His servant here and hereafter to eternity, having no pleasure but in doing His will. Say nothing of this: I could not help pouring out my spirit a little to you. You know not what I suffer. My private prayers are most unaccountably flat and unfeeling, even on the very days that I exhort others with vehemence and with tears: still, still I cannot be persuaded that I am to be given up while I have so much steady love to Christ. What an awful text I preached on the other day, “Know ye not that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” If I live I think I shall contrive to be more at Carlisle than I have been hitherto.

N.B. The resurrection of the dead bodies will not be half so surprising as the resurrection of characters.

Yours affectionately,  
J. MILNER.

MRS. HANNAH MORE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Barley Wood, September 24, 1804.

My dear Sir,

I was much gratified with your letter, all communication between us having been suspended so long. I rejoice that you are at last got to sea air and refreshing quiet. I thank you much for your corrections. I inclose my intended first chapter,\* copied close that it might come within the frank. I really do look on the work I have undertaken as so important in itself, and so very much above my hand, that it would be a very great thing to me if you could contrive time to look it over. I know how you are pressed for time, nor would I break in on it for any ordinary business, but you know more exactly than any one the very thing I want.

I gave your message to Mr. Knox, who kindly felt that part of it which related to himself, and for his noble

\* Hints to a Princess.

friend lamented how much politics and the world impaired all virtue that was not guarded by religion. He has left for you a nice little book of which he is the editor. It is "Burnett's Lives," of which he is very fond, with some additions, and a preface by himself. I will watch for an opportunity to send it you. He is a most extraordinary man; and now that he is in tolerable health, and has surmounted those dreadful nervous complaints which, when last in England, made him at times almost as bad as Cowper, constantly possesses that cheerful happiness which is the fruit of his piety. He is almost the most intellectual and spiritual man I ever knew;—not a thought or care is given to the world. Having been a grand instrument in accomplishing the great work of the Union, he turned his back on politics and politicians, and lives in a religious retirement. His taste is exquisite; his knowledge, particularly in theology, profound and various. His chief delight is in contemplation and inward religion; but he is not in all points in our way. He is of the Platonic Christian school, a disciple of Cudworth, Lucas, Whichcote, Scougal, Worthington, and Joseph Mede. In our disputes, however, I tell him that while Leighton and Baxter are his first favourites, we shall not quarrel much. He passed near three weeks with us: we often wished for you. I hope he will return for a day or two before he goes to Ireland.

Our kindest love to Mrs. W. Do not forget to inquire how I can send you a little work.

May God bless you all!

Yours affectionately,

H. MORE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Lyme, October 29, 1804.

My dear Friend,

I have this day received another packet of your manuscript, and have returned you the five chapters and

the Introduction. Now I must enter into a treaty with you. I had fully intended, and half promised, that before my falling to work on a literary business preparatory to our abolition discussions next winter, I would employ a few mornings in writing for the "Christian Observer:" if, therefore, I engage in your service, you positively must supply my place to Messrs. Editors of the Christian Observer. Your subjects are so new and so important, that it really costs as much time to revise as it would to write, and I would not pay your works so bad a compliment as to accost them in any other than my best state. I must therefore receive from you an assurance that you will give me a credit for as many hours as I expend in your service, and I assign over the amount to Messrs. the Editors above-mentioned, who may be paid in any coin which bears your image and superscription. It will, I fear not, pass current; so fall to work accordingly.

I have not been so well of late, and am half afraid of its being thought right that I should go to Bath; but I hope to find myself better in a few days, and to be absolved from the necessity of quitting my retirement till Parliament calls us together, when I presume Windham and Co. (a strange partnership) will require our attendance. Our friend Patty will supply all needful terms of condemnation, so I may conclude, assuring you that I am ever,

My dear Friend,  
With kind remembrances to all the Sisterhood,  
Yours very sincerely and affectionately,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

The parcel went by Larcombe, who puts up at the "Three Queens," Thomas Street; a most appropriate sojourning for the carrier of princely admonitions.



W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO —.

Lyme, November 3, 1804.

My dear —,

Your kindness in desiring me not to write to you is not lost on us, but really you have a right to expect letters when not in the way of hearing of us from other friends, especially daring the recess of Parliament. It would surely be a very unequal distribution to allot nothing to the claims of affection, and yet to be so just in paying to the utmost the minutest demands of business. Having therefore got through most of my tare and trett correspondences, let me enter on one which engages more of the heart if it taxes the head less.

The letter I am now about to write ought, however, to call for supplies from both, for it is to tell my dear — of a fault; and to do that affectionately, and to do it skilfully, both heart and head should be set to work. Yet I know in your case the latter may be dispensed with—you will require no more than that sincere affection which will really prompt my pen; and any skilful ingenious apologies, which to those who are disposed to hear of any thing but their faults might be necessary, may be left out. I have long thought of telling you that I do not think you always behave quite well to Mr. —. It is, I know, a delicate matter to interfere between husband and wife, but your love for me, and your Christian humility also (I really say it from my heart without flattery) are such, that I need not keep back any thing, or fear lest any thing I say should offend you, or lessen the affection which I trust will ever mutually prevail between us. You probably know yourself what I mean—a certain quickness of reply which is unbecoming the submissive obedient demeanour which certainly should distinguish the wife towards her husband. I must do Mr. — the justice to say, that his behaviour on such occasions, and sometimes after them, has been such as to give me the sincerest pleasure—such as to show a mind eminently brought into subjection to Christian principles; I cannot say how much it

has pleased me. I own, I fear that I should not have behaved so well in such circumstances; and, though I well know it is only the surprise of the moment in you, and that it indicates no want of affection or respect, yet it would have grieved me extremely, and have had a tendency to weaken my affection. Let me beg you, my dearest —, to pray and to strive against it, and to be silent, if you find that by speaking you should offend against the law of conjugal duty.

And now having said this, which I fear may grieve you, let me however assure you that it has given me solid comfort to see you improve in what is most important,—indeed I have no fears for you. Look with confidence, with humble confidence indeed, but with confidence to the Saviour, who has assured us that none who come to Him shall be sent back. Oh! we do not practically give half the credit we ought to the mercy and condescension, and tenderness of our gracious shepherd! Let us but sit down and consider the real meaning and force of such a passage as “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd,” and the beautiful words which follow. Again, of such a passage as “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me.” How much again is included in that most consolatory passage, “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with him freely give us all things?” O! let us meditate on these passages, and endeavour to do justice to them! Again, that striking one, “If ye being evil, give good gifts to your children,” &c. I often think of it when I see my wife fondling little Bon, that God’s love is said to exceed that which women bear to their children.

I think Miss Horner would find Leighton particularly gratifying and useful to her. I never read an author who appeared to me to have drunk so deeply of the Spirit; and his life was accordingly. The children are pretty well, and little Bon plumper and more laughter loving and causing than ever. Miss S. here brings in

little Bon, and little merry Bab runs in,—poor dear little souls.

Yours ever,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Lyme, November 15, 1804.

My dear Friend,

I was extremely engaged when I got your letter, which mentioned the first impression produced by mine, and the kind solicitude it had occasioned. I always knew you to be a woman of great wit and of true wit; and as wit has been defined to be the coupling together dissimilar and widely separated ideas, I may truly say that never was there a more decisive witticism, if you use it so ill (for it is shocking usage of wit,) as to carry it to its definition. I really think there scarcely ever were, or can be, two men more different from each other in all their ideas than Windham and myself; and though it has been sometimes held that men of different tempers may form useful partnerships (ay, even in wit itself, as “how Beaumont’s judgment tempered Fletcher’s wit”) and even lasting friendships, yet for men to act together in political affairs, requires in general some little (and often you will say but very little) agreement in their principles, judgments, &c.

But how shall I ever get through your business, or any body else’s business, if I run away my time in this way, and that too when I am not in a state to keep to the desk long together, and therefore having but little working time at command, should make the most of it? Well, a few minutes may be fairly spared to friendship, when so many of mine, alas! are doomed to the endurance of a display of mutual enmity—which brings us again to Windham; and as that is rather too fertile a field to allow one to gather in a few minutes a millionth of the harvest it affords, let us leave it standing, regretting that so rich a soil should be of so little real productive

value. The truth is, there is all that was erroneous in Burke, and little to redeem it in the man's principles, as there was in Burke, who, with all his errors and extravagances, yet called forth one's love and esteem very often, and still more often one's admiration. Kind remembrances.

Ever affectionately yours,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO J. STEPHEN, ESQ.

Lyme, Sunday night, 10 o'clock, November 18, 1804.

My dear Stephen,

I have been waiting with more anxiety than any one but you would conceive, in hopes of seeing or hearing of a proclamation forbidding the slave trade to the conquered colonies; and am so much disappointed in not even now finding any thing said about it in the newspapers, that I break through the resolution I had made not to mention the matter to you, that the measure might break upon you at once, and I quite enjoyed in idea your demeanour and feelings on the annunciation of it. But I have no correspondent in town on whom I can depend for letting me know, and this is such a sad town for intelligence, that I doubt if a Gazette comes near it. I may therefore wait many days longer without being informed how the matter really is settled, or whether it be settled at all. The Order in Council was to have been brought before the Privy Council on Wednesday or Thursday se'night last; but it was put off on some ground of form, and partly because Tobago was not to be included. Let me beg you to give me what information you can. I have been intending to write to you. You have been always in my thoughts, but I waited, hoping this business would be brought to some point. I have had much writing about it for a long time past.



Wishing and praying that God may grant you every blessing in time and eternity, I am ever

Affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Lyme, November 22, 1804.

My dear Friend,

Having received your letter last night, I made many inquiries this morning after another Lyme and Bristol carrier, finding that Larcombe would not set out on his return before Monday next; but I am assured that no such carrier is to be found; and you must remember that, in common, the commodities these gentlemen have to transport are not of such a fermentable sort as yours, with which Mr. Larcombe, like Cowper's unconscious newsman, has been honoured; but (here I am irresistibly summoned to a contest at marbles, and, in these days of the rights of man, as I would not furnish any valid ground for rebellion, and remembered I was at Lyme, I obeyed the call). To return to Mr. Larcombe's cargo: it consists of articles which may in general rest in peace in expectation of their conveyance. I am assured that on Monday Larcombe will take his departure, and I already have ready for him—

Chap. 4.\* Importance of ancient history:—Egypt and Persia.

Chap. 5. Greece.

Chap. 6. Rome.

Chap. 7. I have already sent you.

Chapters 5. and 6. you will improve greatly by adding to them; they are now the essential oil of their respective histories. I will try to let you have another chapter, *i. e.* chapter 8. before next conveyance. Farewell.

Yours ever,

W. WILBERFORCE.

\* Of the Manuscript of "Hints for a Princess."

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Lyne, December 4, 1804.

My dear Friend,

Never fear: the parcel is not—cannot be lost: such an event never happened; and sooner than it shall not be rummaged out, I will send my servant, if it be needful, to hunt himself in the wagoner's chaos. I will write by the post which takes this letter, to this same miscreant at the White Lion, and tell him that if the parcel do not forthwith appear he shall be sent to the army of St. Domingo, a far more worthy cause for such an effect than one which produced it to a French officer, a lieutenant-colonel, who not being drilled into the perfect discipline of the new school, when at a ball given by Madame Buonaparte, Napoleon, being persuaded to dance, made as if he offered him his sword and belt to keep for him, as if he had been a valet, drew back a little:—"Ha," exclaims the mighty Napoleon, (before he was emperor,) "I find I was mistaken;" and beckoning to one who actually was a general officer (and doubtless must have been sure to become so in any army, whereas, too generally, suppleness is the road to rank), "Here," says he to the general officer, who instantly came forward from a distance with a most courtier-like agility, and took the sword and belt, and held them in a most obsequious attitude. No more was said: but when the poor lieutenant-colonel got home, he found already on his table an order to join the army of St. Domingo.

How came I to tell this long story, when I am much pressed for time, and must be short in business, because long in trifling? The chapter you want I will get through, if it please God, in a very few days; and to prevent all mischances I will send it by the post in franks. I have been running over part of it to-day, and see it will take much time to think over; but let me advise you to read that chapter in the first part of Butler's analogy, wherein he expressly treats of the sure progress to power and dominion of a state which should

be established and governed on religious principles. I rather think 'tis the fifth, but I am sorry I have not the book here; luckily I have another here who is decidedly on our side, and whom I well remember, because I have often been about to quote him against Windham, I mean Machiavel; and there is in Montesquieu (whom consult) some passage wherein he speaks of the importance of religion. Farewell.

Yours ever,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO Z. MACAULAY, ESQ.

Lyme, December 7, 1804.

My dear Sir,

I feel uneasy in not coming forward to assist poor Hall;\* and really mere feelings, and feelings less legitimate than Christian sympathy, prompt one to desire to contribute liberally towards his aid. But as it is impossible for me to judge what I ought to subscribe, because that must depend on what others give, and what in the whole is raised, I must again trespass on you, and beg you to judge and put down my name accordingly. I doubt in my own mind between 10*l.* and 20*l.* But surely it is a strange plan to buy him an annuity at the precise period at which you cannot judge at all what income will be wanted for his comfortable subsistence. If, poor man, he should never recover, I should imagine that after that becomes clear, 100*l.* per annum would be as much as would be desirable. Do they doubt people's willingness to subscribe, except under the impulse of the first shock of such an article of intelligence? I hope there can be no cause for such a precaution. I beg you will deal unreservedly with me, and if even 20*l.* be less than you think I ought to give, tell me freely.

The Rev. Mr. Snape again wants books and tracts; may I beg you to send him a supply to Bolton in Lan-

\* Robert Hall was at this time afflicted with insanity.

cashire? It is a large place, where he makes great exertions, but wants help; only think of making, on a *very* bad day, for his schools, a subscription at church, of near 100/.

I hope to send you a paper for the Christian Observer to-morrow.\* You will think it too much of a novel; but in all the leading particulars it is really true. I wish I could help you still more. Kind remembrances.

Yours ever,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE. ESQ. TO JAMES STEPHEN, ESQ.

Lyme, December 20, 1804.

My dear Stephen,

I hope I need not assure you that no considerations of ease or self-indulgence should prevent my setting out for London directly, if I thought it would be productive of benefit to our great cause; but after a little reflection, I am clearly of an opposite opinion. Here I may, and I trust I shall, get a little time to work at something which may hereafter come into use, but there I know from experience I could do no business. Then the consideration of health is not to be entirely left out of account, and certainly (though no way of life can ever make me a Hercules) the quiet and regularity of our goings on here are highly serviceable to me. I thank God I seldom have been better than during the last three or four days, though the weather is most uncommonly severe for this place; my old enemy, the east wind, brings us your climate, not softened by its passage over the pure Dorsetian downs. But there is one peculiarity of the climate here, that even with an east wind, it is always perfectly clear; no haziness or mist have I ever seen, except in mild warm weather.

I have been very carefully perusing your paper, which in the main I like very much indeed, and hope to turn it

\* Vide "The Letters of Colonus," in Dec. 1804 and Jan. 1805.



to account. Your statement of the ravages of the yellow fever is admirably thrown in. I cannot but regard that dreadful visitation as the scourge of the Almighty, and I fear we shall still more severely feel its effects. I more and more see reason to regret that the public, and even, I have no doubt, ministers themselves, are so ignorant of the horrible cruelties, and detestable perfidy of Buonaparte and his agents towards the St. Domingo blacks; you indeed did your best to enlighten them by the publication of Toussaint's Life, but I wish still more could be done, especially as paragraphs are continually coming out, harping on the cruelties of Dessalines; and the provocations he received are either unknown or forgotten.

Farewell; I am pressed for time, and we have a house in which several of the chimneys smoke in an east wind, which makes sad work with my eyes. Kindest remembrances to my sister. God bless you, my dear Stephen. Let it be to both of us a comfort that we have laboured to resist the wicked and cruel system of the slave trade. I can truly say I often thank the Almighty for conducting me to such a cause, and pray for guidance how I may best conduct it—and think too. But there are more difficulties than you sometimes consider; and I am sure, in your cooler moments, you will think that it would be sad policy to be able to say *liberavi animam meam*, at the expense of doing any good to the cause itself. But do not let us consume our time in these discussions. I hope I need not make any fresh demands on your pen, and will avoid it as much as possible. Once more God bless you.

I am, ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

## H A Y T I A N   L E T T E R S.

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“I have often wished, in some way or other, to do a little justice to poor Christophe. I possess letters from him, which would do him great honour. Perhaps they may form a chapter, if ever any memoranda of my own life and times are put together.”—*Letter from Mr. Wilberforce to one of his Sons*, March 11, 1825.

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WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO GENERAL MACAULAY.

Kensington Gore, April 6, 1816.

My dear General,

No human being has the slightest idea of my writing, or intending to write this letter. Whatever blame, therefore, may be imputable to it, is wholly chargeable on myself. Yet though, when I proceeded to take up my pen, it was with some misgivings, I cannot but hope, whatever you may think of the idea itself which I am about to suggest to you, that you will find my apology for communicating it, not merely in the high esteem it implies, both of your talents and principles, but also in that imperative sense of duty which dictates the communication. I only regret my being so much pressed for time, that I cannot at all do justice to the subject. But you must suppose that I shall leave many of the considerations which are in my mind unimparted, and to be stated to you in person, when I can talk freely, and that I now shall lay before you little more than the main idea. Oh, thought I, last night,

while lying awake, and revolving in my mind the inconceivably important subject of the opportunity of sowing the seeds of knowledge, and still more of Christianity, in Hayti,—Oh that General Macaulay could be prevailed on to go over, though for ever so short a time, as the commander-in-chief of any party that should be sent to King Henry! And why not? thought I. Lord Selkirk was at one time disposed to go to Africa. And then my mind went on building the castle of which I had thus laid the foundation, till there was soon a goodly and most valuable edifice. For more than an hour, I believe, I could not drive out this fabric of the brain, as a necessary preparative to getting to sleep again.

But though the whole prospect presents itself to the eyes of my mind by day in less vivid colours as a reality, my maturest and most wakeful reason approves of it as the most promising of all speculations, if it could indeed be realized. I declare, unless I deceive myself, were I in your situation, and with the same deep convictions I now feel of the great and lasting benefits which would probably result from my engaging in this enterprise, I would undertake it. Besides all the other good consequences, of which one of the greatest would be that your example would dispose respectable and good men, in various lines, to devote themselves to the service of St. Domingo, it would lead—and I see no other probable road—to the substitution of the English for the French language, and of Protestantism for the Roman Catholic religion; because your influence would be such (all mine of course being combined with it,) that you might set up seminaries of instruction, which would, by degrees, produce the desired effect.

Do not, however, suppose, my dear General, that I am not aware, in making this proposal, of the weight of the burden which I wish you to impose on yourself. Still, such are the circumstances of the world, that there is not, I believe, in the whole world any human being so adapted, in all important particulars, as yourself, for this most interesting service. And must that service go unperformed? Let me beg you,

however, to peruse the letters from King Henry and De Limonade, and you will then better judge of their state of mind ; and if you do not at once dash the cup from your hand, I think a more detailed and particular discussion of the question would dispose you to drink it. But I must break off. Forgive me, my dear General, for my freedom ; and I will only add again, that were I so circumstanced, and so qualified, as you are, for I am the one as little as the other, (I have not been used to command men, act and think in times of bustle, and I cannot speak French fluently,) I should esteem the service as one of the most honourable, and, in all its consequences, the most beneficial, in which I could possibly engage.

I am ever, my dear General,  
 With cordial esteem and regard,  
 Your sincere and affectionate Friend,  
 W. WILBERFORCE.

I will thank you to return the papers as soon as you can. I have not time to read over what I have written, but the meaning must be plain. Mistakes of language you will excuse.

GENERAL MACAULAY TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Downing Street, April 8, 1816.

My dear Sir,

I am prevented going to Kensington Gore this morning as I had intended, and therefore I return the papers. Your powerful appeal is irresistible, and I hold myself at your disposal. I would, however, suggest for your consideration how far government would be disposed to relish a visit by me to St. Domingo under our present equivocal relations with France in respect to that island—incognito I could not go ; and when you reflect on my acquaintance with Lord Wellington—my rank in the army—my having filled diplomatic



situations, &c., I feel more than half inclined to doubt the practicability of your reconciling government to such a mission. I shall say no more at present, as I shall take the earliest opportunity of being disengaged to see you.

Believe me, my dear Sir.

Most faithfully yours,

C. MACAULAY.

HENRY (CHRISTOPHE, KING OF HAYTI) TO W.  
WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Au Palais de Sans-soucy, 18 Novembre, 1816.  
l'An 13 de l'Indépendance.

HENRY, par la Grace de Dieu et la Loi Constitutionnelle  
de l'Etat, Roi d'Haïty, &c. &c. &c.  
à W. WILBERFORCE, Esq., Membre du Parlement  
Britannique, &c. &c.

Mon Ami,

Je me sers de l'occasion de M. Chalmers, homme simple et sûr, que j'ai employé à mon service dans sa profession, pendant le séjour qu'il a fait à Haïty, pour vous adresser ma réponse à vos trois lettres, privées et confidentielles, sous les dates des 14 & 20 Août dernier.

Je vois avec plaisir, mon ami, la manière franche et amicale, que vous agissez dans nos communications. J'agirai comme vous, sans réserve, et vous verrez que je suis digne d'entendre et de connaître la vérité. Vous pouvez vous reposer sur la discrétion de mes secrétaires pour toutes les communications et les ouvertures que vous auriez à me faire. Lorsque vous aurez quelque chose d'important et de confidentiel à me faire part, vous pouvez charger une personne dévouée de vos dépêches et me l'adresser directement. Je ferai solder religieusement les frais que ses dépenses auront causées.

Sanders vous a dit avec raison que j'entends par-

faitement l'Anglais; c'est dans cette langue que je désire que vous continuiez toujours à correspondre avec moi.

Je goûte parfaitement vos idées lumineuses sur les grands principes du gouvernement que vous m'avez exposés. Je suis persuadé de leur efficacité pour le bonheur de mes concitoyens, et pour mon propre bonheur, puisqu'il ne se compose que de celui de mes concitoyens. Mon application constante sera de les employer. Je ferai tout ce qui sera en mon pouvoir pour justifier la haute opinion que mes amis, et vous en particulier, avez conçue de moi. Je suis pénétré, mon cher Wilberforce, des sentimens généreux et philanthropiques que vous m'exprimez, et je serais indigne de l'amitié pure que vous m'avez vouée, si je ne faisais tous mes efforts pour la mériter, en suivant les sages conseils que vous me donnez.

Vous voyez avec quelle sollicitude je m'empresse à donner le bienfait de l'éducation à mes concitoyens : la nouvelle méthode me paraît la plus sublime qu'on puisse employer pour préparer les études. Je suis émerveillé des effets de cette excellente méthode ; tous mes soins seront de l'étendre, et de lui donner à Haïty toute l'extension et l'encouragement possible. C'est bien aussi mon intention de faire délivrer des prix aux élèves qui se seront distingués ; chaque école ou collégé aura une époque fixée pour la distribution des prix, comme celle de l'indépendance, de ma fête, celle de la reine, de mes enfants, et ceux des autres jours mémorables de notre Révolution. Je me suis efforcé autant qu'il m'a été possible de faire inculquer les principes de religion et de morale parmi mes concitoyens ; mais, mon ami, songez combien un peuple, nouvellement sorti des ténèbres de l'ignorance et de l'esclavage, qui a éprouvé vingt cinq ans de secousses et de révolution, a besoin encore de temps, de soins, et d'efforts, pour parvenir à étendre les principes religieux et moraux dans toutes les classes de la société ; l'objet de ma sollicitude est donc de les étendre encore davantage, mais non pas les principes de cette religion

défigurée par la fanatisme et la superstition, mais cette religion que vous professez, pleine de l'essence et de l'humanité de son divin Auteur. Il y a longtemps que je désire la voir établie à Haïty.

Par la considération et le respect dont j'ai entouré les liens du mariage, je n'ai qu'à me louer de l'empressement de mes concitoyens à les former, et des heureux résultats qu'ils ont pour la morale.

La tolérance est établie à Haïty. Je permets à chacun la liberté d'y servir la Divinité à sa manière. J'étendrai, s'il est nécessaire, les effets de cette tolérance en lui donnant la plus grande latitude. Je suis pénétré et je sens la nécessité de changer ce que les manières et les habitudes de mes concitoyens peuvent encore conserver de semblables à celles des Français, et de les modeller sur les manières et les habitudes Anglaises; la culture de la littérature Anglaise dans nos écoles, dans nos collèges, fera prédominer enfin, je l'espère, la langue Anglaise sur la Française; c'est le seul moyen de conserver notre indépendance, que de n'avoir absolument rien de commun avec une nation dont nous avons tant à nous plaindre, et dont les projets ne tendent qu'à notre destruction. Il y a longtemps que je désire que la langue Anglaise soit la langue nationale de mon pays.

J'en ai toujours parlé à mes concitoyens, je leur ai toujours fait sentir la nécessité de n'avoir absolument rien de commun avec la nation Française, d'embrasser la religion Anglicane comme la plus sublime, comme celle où l'on trouve généralement le clergé le plus vertueux, le plus honnête, et le plus éclairé; bien différent en cela du clergé Catholique Romain, dont la dissolution de mœurs est connue, l'apôtre et le défenseur de l'esclavage. Je leur ai fait connaître l'énorme différence qui existe entre les Anglais et les Français; combien ces derniers se sont dégénérés et avilis; que lorsqu'on voudrait désigner un homme vil et faux, l'on devrait dire faux comme un Français... je sais cependant que, généralement parlant, il y a des honnêtes gens dans tous les pays, mais presque tous les Français que

nous avons eu occasion de connaître, ne se sont pas montrés à nous sous des couleurs plus favorables . . . qu'au contraire, les Anglais adorent leur patrie, qu'ils sont si embrasés du patriotisme national, et que la trahison est si abhorré et détesté chez eux, qu'à peine peut on citer un petit nombre de traîtres; combien ils sont braves, loyaux, philanthropes, religieux observateurs de leur parole; qu'il suffisait à un Anglais de jurer sur la Bible, pour être cru sur sa parole; qu'on n'avait jamais vu d'exemple qu'ils avaient faussés leurs paroles, ou leurs affirmation si solennellement données; qu'on ne pouvait pas en dire autant des Français, et des Catholiques Romains, qui faisaient journellement profanation des choses réputées les plus saintes parmi eux; que le souverain, qui se qualifie de fils aîné de l'Eglise, n'a pas craint de laisser signer, par son ministre, sans provocation, comme sans insulte, la mort de 400 mille de mes concitoyens, pour pouvoir à repeupler notre pays avec son malheureux frères transplantés d'Afrique; que ce souverain, qui se dit si religieux, a envoyé de vils espions pour intriguer, semer le trouble et la confusion dans notre pays tranquille; qu'il ne travaille qu'au rétablissement des pré jugés et de l'esclavage, jusque même dans son propre pays. Enfin, je désire que mes concitoyens puissent posséder les vertus des Anglais pour leur propre bonheur.

Les Haïtiens aiment généralement les Anglais; c'est le seul peuple avec laquelle ils puissent mieux compatir. Mes concitoyens feront tout ce que je leur conseillerai, car ils sont intimement persuadés que mes conseils n'ont pour but que leur bonheur. J'emploierai mon influence, les leçons puissantes de l'exemple, pour les amener à ce point si désiré, et je suis d'avance assuré qu'ils se porteront avec joie à cette grande réforme, quand le temps en sera arrivé; c'est-à-dire, lorsque la connaissance de la langue Anglaise sera répandue dans une partie de la population, ce qui ne sera pas longtemps, d'après la méthode de Lancaster, et d'après les heureuses dispositions que montrent les élèves qui s'instruisent sous M. Gulliver.\* Je désire de tout mon cœur que les souhaits

\* A schoolmaster sent out by Mr. Wilberforce.—*Life of Wilberforce.*



que vous avez faites pour le bonheur et l'instruction des Haïtiens puissent se réaliser. Puissiez-vous à votre tour, O mon ami, vous énorger des vertus et de la civilisation de ce peuple, dont vous aurez été un des bienfaiteurs ! Croyez que leur reconnaissance sera éternelle ; croyez aussi que ma pensée sera sans cesse portée vers le grand but pour lequel vous désirez les voir élevés ; en effet, combien je m'estimerai heureux de les voir contribuer à vos vues en vous aidant à perfectionner et améliorer le sort de nos frères d'Afrique. J'ai reçu et agréé, mon ami, avec sensibilité, votre portrait que vous m'avez adressé. Il me tardait de posséder les traits d'un de nos plus vertueux amis ; en retour, et d'après le désir que vous m'avez témoigné, je vous envoie le mien, et celui de mon fils, le Prince Royal, que j'ai fait peindre par le Sieur Evans.

Je souhaite que vous acceptiez ce gage de mon amitié, avec autant de plaisir que j'en ai eu à recevoir le vôtre, et que vous puissiez les considérer comme ceux de deux de vos plus sincères amis. J'ai appris avec le plus grande peine, et j'ai été désappointé, que le but pour lequel j'avais adressé dernièrement des confitures en Angleterre, a totalement manqué, par l'indiscrétion de Sanders ; ne pouvant connaître en quelle somme se seraient élevés les droits. M. Strafford m'avait cependant promis d'écrire à cet effet.

Je vous prie, mon ami, de me faire agréer dans la Société de l'Institution Africaine, dans celle de la Société de la Bible Anglaise et Etrangère, et dans celle de l'Ecole Anglaise et Etrangère, si toutefois il n'y aurait pas d'impossibilité, et alors vous le feriez de la manière que vous croirez la plus convenable. Lorsque les lettres de change que je compte vous adresser vous parviendront, vous pourrez faire couvrir les frais que cette admission aura nécessitée.

Je suis et demeure tout à vous,

Votre Ami,  
HENRY.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD TEIGNMOUTH.

Kensington Gore, June 18, 1817.

My dear Lord,

I have received a letter from the Count de Limonade, Secretary of State to the Haytian Government, dated 20th March last, containing the following passage:—"His Majesty has already expressed to you, through me, his wish to repay the British and Foreign Bible Society for the Bibles and Testaments, French and English, which Lord Teignmouth was so obliging as to send him in the Society's name. His Majesty now begs you to embrace the first opportunity of paying the amount (which he, Count Limonade, mentions as 1601 or 1602 dollars), in such a manner as not to wound the delicacy of that venerable Society, for which His Majesty feels the highest respect."

There can be no impropriety, I trust, in my deviating from the course prescribed to me, by an open and direct communication to the Society through your Lordship; because there will, I dare say, be no such feeling as King Henry had the delicacy to apprehend opposed to the acceptance of payment for the books, though intended by our Society as a gift. On the contrary, the Society, I am sure, will be gratified by such a proof of the value King Henry puts on the Holy Scriptures, and of his disposition to encourage the circulation of them among the Haytian people.

In giving them this title, and in calling that extraordinary man their king, I shall not be misunderstood by your Lordship. It would be less consonant to the duties of neutrality to use appellations not only inconsistent with the rights they assert, but with the situations in which they actually stand. But while we take no part in any political questions between the rival Haytian governments, or between them and France, we must, as men and as Christians, applaud and sympathize with the zeal of King Henry, in promoting the intellectual and moral improvement of the people over whom he presides; and I think it due to him to say, that, to my

knowledge, it is not in the present instance only that he has proved himself earnestly intent on fulfilling that sacred duty of a sovereign. He applied to me some time ago by letter, with a pressing request that I would assist him in procuring and sending over from this country proper persons to instruct his people in letters and useful arts, undertaking to bear the whole expense of their voyage, as well as to provide for them liberally on their arrival. Though I have only been able, in a small part, to accomplish his beneficent purposes, yet so forward has he been to supply me with the means of executing his wishes, without any possible inconvenience to myself, that he would not wait for the ordinary commercial means of remittance, but purchased bills of exchange, and has remitted them to my brother-in-law Mr. Stephen and myself, for the beneficent uses above specified, lest his favourite purpose should be delayed. I am therefore only paying over part of King Henry's money when, in pursuance of his wish, I send the price of the Bibles and Testaments to the treasurer of the Society.

I have the more pleasure in making this communication through your Lordship to our Society, because King Henry has been so often represented to the British public in a very unfavourable light. Many, I doubt not, have been the inventions of his enemies; and this very business furnishes a proof of the assertion. For your Lordship will probably recollect that this very Count de Limonade, whose official letter I have received by the latest conveyance, was stated in the newspapers to have been shot by King Henry at a public dinner some months ago. Let any one who wishes to form a more unprejudiced estimate of King Henry's character, read the work of Colonel Malanfant,—of an author who was no friend of the African cause, but a French officer and a St. Domingo proprietor; who, however, has stated and could admire the great qualities of this extraordinary man.

I have the honour to be, my dear Lord,

Your Lordship's faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE KING OF HAYTI.

[Private.]

October 8, 1818.

Sire,

Elevated as is your own situation, you would stand far less high in my estimation were I not persuaded that the intelligence which I am about to communicate will gladden your Majesty's heart, as it has just now warmed and exhilarated mine; for with delight I have this day read a letter from one of the Secretaries of State informing me, that (blessed be God for this most important event!) the Spanish court has actually signed a treaty by which she has stipulated to abolish the cursed slave trade immediately to the north of the Line, and generally and finally to abolish it in May, 1820, having acceded also to conditions (without which an abolition would be far less valuable) for carrying the law into practical effect. Similar conditions for enforcing the Abolition north of the Line have been agreed upon with Portugal, and we shall use our utmost efforts to prevail on France and the United States of America to accede to a similar treaty; for I grieve to say that I now hear that, notwithstanding their abolition laws, an illicit trade in human flesh is still carried on to a great extent both by French and American subjects. But having just now received this most welcome intelligence respecting Spain, I felt invincibly prompted to communicate the good tidings to your Majesty, first of all my correspondents. It is not without the payment of a large sum of money that we have brought the Spanish cabinet to such conditions. It was only by purchase that a less favourable convention could be obtained from Portugal. But how can money be so well employed as in thus effecting the deliverance of so great a portion of our fellow-creatures from the most cruel scourge that ever afflicted the human race? How better than in assisting to batter down that barrier by which vast regions of the earth have been kept for centuries in darkness and barbarism; the light and improvement being



intercepted which they would otherwise have derived from their intercourse with more polished nations? But, as the Baron de Vastey truly remarks, how would Europe ever have been civilized if the previously enlightened nations had established a regular system of slave trading along her coasts, by which her whole interior would have been rendered one vast field of insecurity and terror? But Monsieur de Vastey seems not to know what I once mentioned in the House of Commons,—what Mr. Pitt also mentioned as a fact at once curious and humiliating to British arrogance,—that the English themselves were formerly the objects of a regular slave trade.\* . . . . But neither your Majesty nor I have leisure for this discussion, and therefore I must desist from it, before I have said all that it suggests.

Unless I hear to the contrary, I shall write to your Majesty only on general subjects and principles, and on topics the peculiar delicacy of which may render me desirous of submitting my sentiments to your own eye. In the case of matters of detail, or of those which, however important, are less secret or delicate in their nature, I shall address myself to your ministers. Under the former head indeed, as that which is in the highest degree interesting to me, no less than to yourself, I go on to state that I made it my business lately to ascertain whether or not the French were still meditating an attack on you; and though, on account of the mischievous consequences which might result from your not being prepared to meet any such attack, both Mr. Stephen and I have always been afraid of saying (what I must state to be the general language of well-informed men) that the French have relinquished all their hopes of reconquering the island, yet I am happy to be able to assure your Majesty that I had it from good authority a very few weeks ago, that no preparations of a hostile character towards Hayti were making in France. The slave trade being abolished, I cannot myself conceive

\* Mr. Wilberforce then mentions the trade for supplying Ireland with English slaves, &c.

that any violence or folly of the ex-colonists would induce the French court to incur the heavy expense which a new Haytian expedition would occasion. May God avert any such an undertaking for your people's sake, for humanity's sake, nay for the sake of the poor creatures themselves who would become the victims of the madness and blindness of their governors in France !

And now, in justice to myself, let me remark to your Majesty, though I believe it was mentioned in my last letter, that it is by no means easy to find for Hayti professors and teachers properly qualified, and on whose principles and characters we can securely rely. Except in the naval and military professions, the disinclination of men of good character to go abroad is very great, unless they can find no way of maintaining themselves at home. But from this remark must be excepted what, blessed be God ! has now become a large class—that of Christian missionaries. There are several societies in this kingdom for the purpose of maintaining these ; and numbers of missionaries have been sent out to all parts of the world (to our own West Indies among others) wherever, from the circumstances of the case, there was any want of religious instruction and moral improvement. Some of these, I doubt not, would be happy to settle under your Majesty's protection ; and you may be assured that I should send none on whose character and conduct I could not rely. But the situation of Hayti is such as must call forth the enthusiasm of every well-informed and generous mind—and there are already many in this country ; and in proportion as we can make the public acquainted with the grand experiment on human nature which your Majesty is carrying on, there will be more and more of those who are anxious in any way in which they may be able, to promote the accomplishment of your designs for the instruction and improvement of your people. But in many quarters the grossest errors now prevail respecting those designs (from what cause originating I need not specify), as well as respecting the real state of Hayti. We had good reasons for not taking measures sooner for en-

tering into the controversy which our proceeding to undeceive the public would certainly have produced. This will be, however, a work in which at the proper time we shall gladly engage hereafter; and the powerful pen of my dear brother Mr. Stephen, as well as my own, if needed, will I doubt not be willingly devoted to this service. Still, even at present, there are many friends of the Haytian cause: for these I am anxiously looking out, in conjunction with my dear friends Mr. Stephen, Mr. Macaulay, and many other zealous advocates of the African cause. And I trust that many of those who may have been urged in part into your Majesty's service by the fair influence of prudential motives, may also take no small interest in the success of your Majesty's generous wishes for the enlightening and elevating of your people.

Religious men But, whatever may in some few instances be the effects of natural benevolence only to be confirmed in.

or of moral probity, or of professional honour, long and large experience in life has convinced me, that religion alone can be depended upon for enabling men with spirit and perseverance to discharge a course of laborious duties, or to resist the temptation to which they will be necessarily exposed.

And on this most important subject of religion and morals, I will open my mind to your Majesty with frankness; because I remember,—surely I can never forget it,—that you declared yourself my friend, and therefore entitled me to use that best right of friendship, the right to state my sentiments without reserve, assured that justice will be done to the motive which has prompted them, even where doubts may be entertained of their propriety. But of your Majesty I have no doubt; I can have no doubt that the friend of Toussaint will concur with me in opinion that it is on the basis of religion alone that the prosperity of political communities, no less than the well-being of individuals, must be founded. All the wise legislators of antiquity have held this doctrine, as well as the greatest writers of modern times, as Machiavel, Montesquieu, &c., however little religion is in their personal characters. The

Roman state, which at last established its dominion over all the rest, was declared by the wisest and best as well as one of the most celebrated of its citizens, Cicero, to owe all its superiority to the fear of the gods; and it was not till the decay of this grand principle of religion that the decline of the state began, which too soon terminated in its ruin.

But if even a false religion could produce such effects, by causing men to expect after this life the rewards or punishments of a Supreme Being, instead of looking only to present interest or gratification, how much more effectual must the influence of true religion be! And it is the glory of the religion which we Englishmen profess, that it is friendly to true liberty—liberty combined with law and order. Our religion courts the light. It gives the Holy Scriptures into the hands of every individual, and tells him to make the lessons which they inculcate the univiversal rule of his thoughts, and words, and actions. I would not wish, however, to conceal from your Majesty, to whom I write with friendly frankness, that though, blessed be God! the religion and morals of this country are not only purer in kind, but also more generally and practically influential than in Roman Catholic countries, yet that they who endeavour to make the word of God their rule of conduct are supposed by many, even here, to push matters too far; and from the first the opponents of the African cause have endeavoured to obstruct our efforts by raising a cry of enthusiasm, fanaticism, &c. This cry, however, has been so long raised that it has nearly lost all its effect. For our private characters, we must refer your Majesty to the testimony of others. For the effects of our principles on our public conduct, I may appeal to my own parliamentary life of thirty-seven years duration. But this much I will venture to say without the risk of contradiction, that great as the body is of religious men in this kingdom,—and, taking them in all their varieties, it is immensely great,—however they may differ in other respects, there is not, I believe, one single individual of the whole number who is not, and



who has not ever been, a zealous friend of the Abolition of the Slave trade,—who is not deeply sensible of the multiplied wrongs of the African race, and earnestly desirous of raising them from their unmerited depression. But I must earnestly entreat your Majesty to bear in mind what I have just now stated, whenever any, whether of your subjects or Europeans, with views more superficial than yours, may object to the practices or restraints which may arise from the religious principles of any of the persons recommended to you.

The only case of this kind that immediately occurs to me is that of the Lord's Day. I know that in all Roman Catholic countries it is usual for even religious people to devote the Sunday afternoon and evening to public and private festivities. Among Protestants there are different opinions as to the degree of strictness with which this day is to be kept; but all religious Protestants, without exception, concur in abstaining from public amusements on the Sunday, and in thinking that the recreations of this day ought to have somewhat of a spiritual character. For my own part, I consider it as mainly intended for strengthening our impression of invisible and eternal things; for cultivating a spirit of love to God, and to our fellow creatures; for devising and promoting plans for the glory of God, and the happiness of man; and, in short, for securing the great object of our everlasting welfare, which the Scriptures teach us depends on the use we make of this probationary state. On saying this concerning the religion of Protestants, your Majesty will remember I am stating what is their principle, not what may be the conduct of men, who, though called Protestants, have little or no religion of any kind; and I am not afraid of your quoting on me, as an instance of the contrary to what I state, the conduct of most of my countrymen in the West Indies. With shame, I own, they constitute an exception to my argument, but an exception of which I trust no Haytian will be disposed to avail himself; and even one of that body, though one of our warmest opponents, recommended the correction of this crying abuse

in some of its most important particulars, more especially in no longer letting the Sunday be the market day throughout the whole of the British West Indies.

To say the truth, the right to spend the Sunday as he pleases is essential to every Protestant idea of toleration; and I think far too highly of your Majesty not to be sure that this right of toleration is one of the very last that you would be disposed to abridge. But, further, in proportion as any of your people become influenced by true religion, they will most likely wish to devote the whole of this day to religious exercises or recreation, and to abstain at least from the ordinary labours of their calling; and believe me that, at the year's end, it will not be found that the sum of your labour will be lessened by this abstinence. I well remember that during the war, when it was proposed to work all Sunday in one of the royal manufactories, for a continuance, not for an occasional service (for all Protestants hold themselves absolved from the general rule in cases of necessity and charity), it was found that the workmen who obtained government consent to abstain from working on Sundays executed in a few months even more work than the others. But I know to whom I am writing; and I will not proceed, as I otherwise might do, to insist on the inseparable connection between religion and morals; and that good morals as well as religion require that men should be left to obey their own sense of duty in this important particular. On consideration, indeed, I rather believe that even the Roman Catholics themselves do not think it right that men should spend any part of the Sunday in the ordinary labours of their calling, though they conceive that after public worship the Sunday may lawfully be allotted to spectacles and other public amusements. Long as I have dwelt on this subject of the Sunday, it is fit that I should make one more remark,—that it is the religious men of all classes and denominations that are, and will be, the friends of Haytian independence and improvement; and that as on the one hand nothing would recommend these interests more powerfully to all these various religionists

than the Protestant observance of the Sunday in Hayti, so, on the other, nothing would tend more to damp their ardour than hearing that Sunday was not distinguished in Hayti by men's abstaining from the ordinary labours of their calling. I am well aware, however, that in introducing this and every other reform, your Majesty must proceed with prudence and sobriety, and more especially I have not the remotest idea of your preventing those who may be so disposed from continuing to spend the Sunday as it is spent in Roman Catholic countries. Here I doubt not that your Majesty will agree with me, that people must be left to follow their own sense of duty.

Good morals. But let me further remark on the important subject of religion, though your Majesty is too well enlightened to render it necessary for me to enter into any formal proof of the position, that as the wellbeing of every political community is intimately connected with the state of its morals, so religion is the only sound and stable basis of morality. Your acknowledgment, which I feel to be a gratifying mark of your confidence of the low state of morals in Hayti, affects me deeply. I scarcely need tell you that it is maliciously commented on by our opponents. But, as you truly remark, how could the case be otherwise, considering the state out of which your people emerged, and the events of the succeeding period? I rejoice from my heart that the Almighty has animated you with the great and generous purpose of improving the morals as the surest means of promoting the happiness of your subjects. By the general diffusion of knowledge just principles will be introduced, and will gradually diffuse themselves throughout the community; the moral standard will be raised, vice will hide its head, and under your Majesty's countenance people of good character will obtain their just credit and ascendancy.

Useful publications. A great variety of excellent little works have been published in this country of late instructive and moral years for the purpose of inculcating useful knowledge and good morals. Many of these, though

professing to be intended for the use of young people, may be read with advantage by persons of any age. A considerable number of these, therefore, have been purchased, and most of them, I trust, will be sent in the Kite. The particulars of them shall be stated to Comte Limonade; but I have thought it right to explain to your Majesty the real object in view in their transmission. Your Majesty will, I doubt not, concur with me in thinking that it may be expedient to let the better and handsomer of them be given as presents to those who distinguish themselves most at the public examinations; and also that a certain number of them should be put at the disposal of the several schoolmasters to stimulate or reward the industry of their pupils, or to bring forward such as they may think deserving of more than ordinary cultivation. A few copies of the different kinds that are very handsomely bound are intended for the use of your Majesty's own family who may be inclined to read them, and I cannot but flatter myself that they will derive both pleasure and profit from the perusal.

Female improvement. And now let me avail myself of the opportunity of opening my mind to your Majesty on one of the most important subjects on which I can address you—a subject at the same time, I am aware, of no little delicacy. To your Majesty I scarcely need remark, that in every age and country one of the grand tests of civilization and refinement has been the respect in which the female sex has been held, or, which is much the same thing, their general condition and treatment. On them devolves the important office of our education in our earlier years. They are the natural softeners and polishers of the roughness and coarseness of the manners of our sex; and it has been truly and well said, that without them our childhood would lose its most necessary support, our youth its best pleasures, and our old age its chief human consolation. Of the many glories of Christianity, it is one of the very first that it has raised the general estimate of the female sex to its just point of elevation; and to this cause is chiefly owing our superiority in all that regards the Christian and generous



emotions of the heart, no less than that refinement and courtesy in manners which have so honourably distinguished the modern nations of Europe in comparison with the real barbarism of the most polished nations of the pagan world, and of the votaries of all those various systems of false religion, Mahometanism, &c. &c., which have prevailed, and still prevail in so large a portion of the earth.

Under the impression of these sentiments I cannot but have witnessed with peculiar pleasure your Majesty's enlightened policy in this particular. But I own I cannot but be very anxious that your Majesty should make it one of your chief objects to improve both the intellectual and moral character, as well as the manners of the Haytian females. I should be happy to be expressly commissioned to search out and send over to you some instructresses for the education not only of the female children of the bulk of the people, but also, and even still more for that of the female children of the higher orders. One lady, indeed, goes by the Kite, who, if her health should be equal to the exertion, would be likely, I trust, to be useful in this way. In what regards the improvement both of the male and female sex, I am persuaded that our chief hopes must be founded on the rising generation; yet in this very country the happiest effects have followed from the recent introduction of adult schools. In these, persons of both sexes and all ages have learnt the art of reading, &c., and what I must confess I had not anticipated, the grown people learn with more facility than the children. Persons as old as fourscore, and of all intervening ages, have learnt in these seminaries; and the effects produced in many cases on the morals of the parties, as well as on their social comfort, have exceeded all that could have been hoped. In several instances men who had been idle drunken fellows, neglecting their wives and families, by merely learning for the first time to read their Bible had become no less remarkable for their sobriety, industry, and good conduct in domestic life. And here also let me not forget to remind your Majesty, that what I have

said of the unlooked-for progress of learning to read of the adults, applies to the female sex no less than to our own.

Conforming to instruction. And now I proceed to a point of no little delicacy, on which I could not write as freely as I shall but for the confidence I repose in your Majesty, and for my hoping your Majesty will repose the same confidence in me: I allude to my having deviated in some instances from your instructions, more especially as to the sums to be expended in different objects, though I ought to state that in these cases I have acted I trust agreeably to your Majesty's instructions, though I may not have adhered expressly to the letter of them. But I must frankly state, that I trust I am not chargeable with vanity or presumption when I take it for granted your Majesty gives me credit for feeling the deepest possible interest in the success of a cause to which I have mainly devoted near thirty years of my life; and I hope I may say, that I am not likely to be a very incompetent adviser, when the interests of that cause are in question. I am happy to act for your Majesty according to the best of my knowledge and experience, to receive your directions as to the general objects to which you point my attention, and even to conform to them in every particular, so far as I conceive that I can do so with propriety. But it is impossible for your Majesty always to know by what precise means these general objects can be best fulfilled; and I must frankly state, without the fear of offending you, that one of the chief advantages to be expected from my being honoured with your commissions, instead of their being committed to any regular agent, is that I may exercise this sort of discretion. I trust I need not assure your Majesty, that I shall be at least as careful even of your pecuniary interest as I would be of my own; and, I will repeat it, I may perhaps be acting according to the spirit of your Majesty's instructions, and therefore in substantial observance of them, even at the very time that I may be differing from them in their literal detail. But on this head I earnestly request your Majesty will

favour me with your undisguised sentiments in plain and precise terms. It will be a satisfaction to me to receive them; and still more, it will enable me to satisfy others, if any of my West Indian traducers should charge me with applying the funds with which you do me the honour to intrust me to different purposes from those to which you intended them. I mean to request Lord Teignmouth and Lord Gambier, the President of the Bible Society and of the Church Missionary Society, to be the auditors of my accounts. Their situations, combined with their very high character, has, even more than their rank and consequence, recommended them to me for this office.

Incessant interruptions, which it is next to impossible to prevent in the neighbourhood of London, have made me fall so behindhand in my Haytian business, that I am forced to hurry to a conclusion; yet there are some topics of extreme importance, which I must not leave altogether unnoticed. If, however, in what follows I rather hint my meaning than fully explain it, much less state at large my arguments for any measure I may specify, let me beg your Majesty to understand the cause of conciseness, and to take it for granted that I have much to say for any course of conduct I may recommend. And, first, let me touch on a topic on which Mr. Stephen and I have often conferred; a topic too of the very first importance to the vital strength as well as the growing improvement of your kingdom. I am aware, indeed, that hitherto your Majesty has been under the necessity of considering yourself as at the head of a great army, in bivouac to be ready to repel the sudden assault of an invading enemy, rather than as administering the concerns of a kingdom at peace with all the world. This we know has rendered it necessary for you to be a nation of soldiers. But surely it cannot be but that you would have notice from your friends in this country if the French court should be infatuated enough to renew their attempt, and consequently should be preparing an expedition commensurate with such an object. I trust, therefore, that your Majesty may be able to allow

your people to slide gradually into the various lines of civil industry, and yet to keep them in a state in which they may be at any time able to come forward effectually for their own preservation, even more than for your Majesty's defence. On this supposition the two objects which I was about to specify, as of extreme and urgent importance in the actual circumstances of your Majesty's kingdom, are the growth of provisions and cotton. Besides which, I trust that the naturalist and mineralogist will ere long enable your Majesty to avail yourself of the natural advantages of Hayti, by discovering new articles of advantageous export. As to provisions, it is an established maxim in political economy, that the increase of food will infallibly ensure an augmented population. As for cotton, every motive of policy and humanity concur in recommending to the utmost possible extent the cultivation of an article so speedily raised, and for which there is a vast and increasing demand. I am happy also in being able to speak decisively of the effect of observing a certain method of cultivating, and still more of cleaning it, which I believe my friend Mr. Macaulay formerly sent to Comte Limonade. I will do myself the honour, however, of transmitting a fresh copy of similar, or nearly similar directions; because I can now add, that where they have been carefully pursued, the cotton has been sold for a decidedly larger price than other cotton in the British markets.

I now come to a topic which I scarcely need assure you is most interesting to my feelings; I mean the recognition of Haytian independence by this country. Here especially I have much to say, had I but the time for stating it; but the sum of all may be comprised in a few words,—that the House of Commons of this country is the body, to the opinion of which the government must ere long conform; that it contains a great number of men strongly prejudiced against that which, for brevity's sake, I may term the African cause; but 'tis true nevertheless, that while several individuals even of this body are susceptible of generous emotions, there



is, I trust, a far greater number of men, now almost wholly ignorant of Haytian concerns, whose minds might be made to kindle into a generous flame by a fair statement of the past wrongs and sufferings, and the present circumstances, and the opening prospects of your most interesting community. When this feeling is once excited, all the rest will follow of course; and I scarcely need assure your Majesty that I and my other friends will be ever on the watch to produce and cherish it. But to enable us better to perform this service it is desirable, and even necessary, that we should be furnished with a detailed though brief history of the principal Haytian occurrences, from the year 1790 or thereabouts to the present time. The more simple the narrative in which it shall be given the better, because it will be considered to be a more accurate delineation of facts, and to owe less to the colouring. I am happy in being able to add, that nothing will tend more powerfully to produce the just and virtuous sympathy which we wish to see prevail, than its being generally known that all the charges against you of oppression and cruelty are malicious calumnies; and that you are employing the rank and power with which Providence has invested you for the civilization, instruction, and moral elevation of your people.

I ought not to conclude this letter without explaining one circumstance in which your Majesty's wishes are still unfulfilled; I allude to your generous desire of contributing to some of our public institutions. I shall have no little pleasure in executing that commission; but this is just one of the cases I have before alluded to, in which your Majesty's friends resident in this country can judge far better concerning the proper season and mode, than any one can do who is on the other side of the Atlantic. I shall keep the matter in constant recollection, and take the step at the time and in the circumstances which shall appear to your Majesty's friends to be most proper.

Augmentation of population. Having often wished that there was any just and humane way by which the popu-

lation of your kingdom might be augmented, while I was thinking on the subject the other day I received some information which I thought might possibly be turned to account. This is, that a society has recently been formed in the United States of America for the purpose of settling their free people of colour in Africa or elsewhere. Whether it may be possible or not for your Majesty to make any use of this intelligence, I know not; but I have thought it right to send it you. I will myself, without delay, apply to one of the principal members of the society; and will state through him to the committee, which consists of leading men from the various states of the Union, the generous efforts you are making for the improvement of your people, and will superadd my persuasion that they can perhaps in no way better accomplish their object of promoting the moral and social advancement of their coloured people, than by bringing them within the range of your benevolent operations.

Before I conclude, permit me to have the honour of sending to your Majesty a copy of the last edition of the British Encyclopædia. It is an excellent publication, in truth a library of itself; and I shall be gratified by your granting it a place in your collection, for the instruction of all your Majesty's family. You will also do me the honour, I hope, of accepting and placing by their side the History of the Inquisition, and that of the Jesuits. There is also one other publication, entitled "Dialogues on Political Economy," which I am almost ashamed to lay before your Majesty; because I have not been able to get it ready bound, and the idea of sending it did not occur to me till yesterday. But it is a work of such uncommon excellence, and contains the substance of the larger works of Dr. Adam Smith and other subsequent writers, so clearly stated and in so small a compass, that notwithstanding its improper attire I cannot but wish to introduce it to your Majesty's acquaintance. It is the privilege of a friend to appear before another in dishabille. An additional difficulty was in the way of getting it bound yesterday; every shop

being shut, not by order of government, but spontaneously, as a willing expression on the part of our whole people for the untimely death of our beloved Princess Charlotte and her infant offspring.

But when I was about to conclude, a point of great importance has just occurred to me, on which I wish to say a few words. We lately, with no small satisfaction, received an account of a measure your Majesty had adopted, which, though related somewhat indistinctly, impressed us with the persuasion that your Majesty was pursuing a course as to your interior policy which, especially if it should be followed out into its proper consequences, would be likely to conduce eminently both to the strength and happiness of your kingdom. This was to give by degrees, on terms of gradual purchase, to a number of men of superior rank and fortune, full property in their land. But it is on this point that I wish further to state to your Majesty the advantages of extending the same principles of policy in the descending scale, by enabling those great proprietors to have a right to re-sell or rather re-let smaller portions of the same landed property to others, securing all these inferior landholders in the possession of their smaller properties as firmly as the larger proprietors are secured in their possession of the larger. This liberal policy was adopted in some of the largest provinces in our East Indian empire about twenty years ago, when Lord Teignmouth was governor-general of India; and a wiser and better system never was pursued. In truth, it was the operation of this system which, as long ago as in the reign of Henry VII., first led the way to the superior greatness and power and comfort of this country, and which gave it a degree of strength and influence far beyond its natural size and population.

I cannot better conclude my long letter than by cordially wishing, that as your Majesty is now pursuing the course of an English monarch, our immortal Alfred, whom we justly account the greatest of all our princes, you may continue to move forward in the same

honourable path, and be like him an example to all who shall hereafter occupy the Haytian throne.

I have the honour to be, &c.

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. Long as my letter has been, all has not yet been said which I wished to lay before your Majesty. I find that the plough is not in use in Hayti; and I have reason to believe, from information derived from books and men, that it would be likely to be eminently useful in the present circumstances of Hayti. It has been introduced with great advantage even in our own West India islands,—slow as they are in general to receive improvements, as all countries are in which slavery prevails. I have therefore taken the liberty of sending two iron ploughs, which I am assured are of the best construction for the intended purpose. They were selected by Mr. Weatherley, who is thoroughly conversant with such matters. Let me beg your Majesty to do me the honour of accepting them, as a slight proof of the interest I take in the internal prosperity of your kingdom. I cannot but hope that my children, some of whom are even now old enough to sympathize with somewhat of their father's warmth of feeling in the fortunes of Hayti and in the success of your Majesty's beneficent plans, will witness the gathering in of a rich and glorious harvest from the seed which you are now sowing, and I trust that they will have reason to account it an honour to themselves that their father enjoyed the privilege of being in any degree permitted to assist in this social and moral cultivation.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO KING HENRY OF HAYTI.

London, November 27, 1819.

Sire, my Friend,

I rejoice in having received your Majesty's letter of the 10th of September within a day or two of the sailing for Hayti of a vessel by which the honest



rustics and their apparatus are to embark. I have already explained why I thought I should best execute your Majesty's commission by sending two ploughmen; and though one of them may appear encumbered with a wife and children, yet being assured that he is an honest and able man, I would not reject him for a cause which will naturally render him more steady and industrious.

Let me assure your Majesty that I in no degree misconstrue your application to our friend Clarkson for the two persons of whom you are in want. On the contrary, I am glad that you have applied to him, conscious that he has more leisure by far than myself; and at the same time, to show your Majesty how perfectly I understand you, and what credit we mutually give each other for friendly frankness and sincerity, I will not forget your Majesty's application; and if I hear of any person peculiarly qualified for the situation in question, I will mention him to Clarkson, that he may himself examine and inquire about him, and compare his qualifications and claims with those of any other candidate.

Both Houses of Parliament are just now called together at what has been a very unusual time for many years, in consequence of the designs and endeavours of many bad men to sow sedition and irreligion among our lower orders, many of whom are in great distress from a considerable stagnation both of internal and foreign trade, which we hope will not be of long continuance. I do not bear the late sittings so well as when I was younger, and I have now so little time at command that your Majesty will excuse my sending you but a few lines. But I must express to you the gratification I have received from finding that the Baron de Vastey has been employing his pen in the very way my friend and brother Mr. Stephen wished, in order to enable him to serve the common cause; and I have also a few words to add on another most important subject: as it is also a subject of no little delicacy, I take the pen into my own hands.

In considering the state of things in Hayti with the eye either of a statesman or a moralist, and reasoning either from experience or from those principles which are acknowledged by all good writers, I am led to the conclusion which I formerly stated to your Majesty, and which indeed I remember with no little pleasure, that you yourself completely admitted that the object the most to be desired, and the attainment of which would most materially advance the prosperity and happiness of your people, is the advancement of morality, and the improvement and elevation of the female character. To this end education is indispensably necessary; and I shall continue to look out for female teachers whom I can confidently recommend. But I must add, that though this is a matter in which positive laws can do but little except in very gross cases of adultery and seduction, yet that the influence of the court, and perhaps a voluntary association among the different classes of society, might be of very powerful operation. We boast in this country, not without reason, that, speaking of the higher circles, our women are much more generally faithful to their husbands than the ladies of any other country in Europe; Switzerland and Holland perhaps excepted. Yet we know but too well that in the time of Charles II. many of our women of quality were justly regarded as licentious. The fact was, that the court was then dissolute; and even in the reigns of the two first Georges, our court was not quite pure. But it is the just praise of our present beloved Sovereign, whose misfortune is felt by every Englishman almost as that of a relative or a friend, that his long reign of sixty years has been remarkable for the unpolluted purity of the court. The Queen, who died, as you know, but lately, never would receive at court any lady of blemished reputation. An excellent story is told of one of her best friends, a lady of high rank, who received a memorable reproof in endeavouring to obtain a dispensation from the common rule in the case of her daughter, who had misbehaved with a nobleman of high rank. "What excuse," said

the Duchess to the Queen, "shall I make to my daughter for not succeeding with your Majesty; for she will not suppose it possible you could refuse me such a favour, and will therefore infer that I never asked it?" "Tell her," replied the Queen, "that you had not the courage to make such a request of me."

Now I have heard with pleasure that your Majesty's own family sets an example of domestic virtue and attachment, like that of our own king and queen. Would it be impossible to have voluntary associations in the different classes of your society, by which, in private parties, those females only were to be admitted who were of unstained reputation? If this could be introduced, I am persuaded that by degrees the standard of public morality would be raised. It would become disreputable for a women to be an intriguer; and though I am not sanguine enough to suppose that it would be possible altogether to prevent intrigues, yet they would be kept secret, and thereby would be prevented from producing public scandal. I am sure your Majesty will excuse my throwing out this hint, which proceeds from the deep interest I take in the well-being and character of your community; and I may truly add, from the confidence I repose both in your judgment and disposition to receive with kindness whatever I may suggest to you.

I have other matters to mention, but for the present I must conclude, assuring your Majesty that I am ever, with cordial respect and regard,

Your sincere Friend,

W. WILBERFORCE.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE HEAD OF THE  
HAYTIAN GOVERNMENT.

Bath, December 16, 1820.

Sir,

Though I am not informed of the name of the correspondent whom I am about to address, and can

only, therefore, describe him by his official character; yet some intelligence which I have this day received prompts me to apply to you.

It is currently reported that M. de Vastey has been imprisoned by the new government of Hayti, and that it is intended to punish him capitally. I have so often found statements concerning Haytian affairs to be false, though asserted with the utmost confidence, that I am by no means disposed to give implicit credit to this report. Nevertheless, as it may be true, I have resolved to take up the pen,—the rather, indeed, because there are other subjects on which I wish to address you, subjects even of more importance and still deeper interest.

I am utterly ignorant of the crimes of which M. de Vastey may have been guilty: and therefore it is not for me to presume to form any opinion on the punishment to be inflicted on him. But it cannot be wrong, nor can it, I trust, be in any degree likely to offend, if, taking, as I must ever do, a deep interest in all that concerns the character and fortunes of all the descendants of the African race, I feel desirous of enforcing on you the important truth, that the eyes of all the civilized world are anxiously directed towards you; and that the course which the Haytians shall pursue in their present critical circumstances, may tend powerfully to gladden or to depress the hearts of those who, like myself, have long been their partisans and advocates. Often has it been confidently affirmed by those who would support the old prejudices which so long obstructed the recognition of their just claim to the common rights and privileges of our nature, that one of the proofs of their inferiority was the violence and cruelty with which they were disposed to act towards each other in those contentions which too commonly take place in political society, although the treatment which they themselves have so long experienced has given them a far better right to recriminate and to reproach their persecutors with being more justly subject to this imputation. An occasion has lately arisen among you for



verifying or refuting the charge of which I have been speaking; and I cannot but fondly cherish the hope, that the treatment of those of your countrymen who may have deserved punishment will be, to use a phrase of our own, "Judgment administered with Mercy." I say this the rather, because the attention of our own countrymen has of late been called peculiarly to the administration of our criminal law; and we have found reason to believe that the punishment of crimes in this country had been more severe than true wisdom or humanity could warrant. At all events, you will, I trust, see the importance of letting the principles of your proceedings be manifest to the world, and that you will let even guilty men enjoy the benefit of a fair and impartial trial.

But it is not only on this head that I wish to address you, but also on other topics which cannot but interest me most deeply, as well as all the other friends of Africa and her descendants. I cannot but hope that the seeds of knowledge and civilization which have already been sown among you will not be torn up and exterminated; but, on the contrary, that they will be suffered to grow up and produce their good fruits for the improvement and happiness of the Haytian people. I am confident that you never can harbour the unjust opinion, that because the late King of Hayti was the friend of instruction and the establisher of schools, any prejudice against them should be entertained. On the contrary, I cannot but believe that in proportion as you are friends to liberty, you will be only the more warmly attached to that knowledge which is its natural associate. More especially I would earnestly recommend to you the instruction of the female sex. On them in every country must devolve the education of its inhabitants in their earliest years; and I cannot but regard it as one of the chief glories of my own country, and more especially when compared with all the nations of antiquity, that we have assigned to the female sex its true estimation, while at the same time its just claim to an equal measure both of the intellectual and moral faculties has been nobly vindicated by our having females in every station of life and every walk of lite-

rature. When the sovereign of this country has been a queen, it has more than once risen to the highest point to which it ever attained both of greatness and of glory ; and as we have become ourselves a more civilized and cultivated people, we have learned to promote the education of our females, and to treat them with increased respect. Let me then earnestly recommend it to you to establish schools for the instruction of the female sex also ; a want which has not yet been supplied, and which remains, I trust, for you to accomplish. I shall be happy in this and every other instance to render you all the assistance in my power ; and you cannot gratify me more than by showing you give me credit for the sincerity of these declarations. I will now detain you no longer than while I subscribe myself, with the warmest wishes, and let me add sincere prayers, for the happiness and true glory of the Haytian people,

Sir, your faithful servant,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO RT. HON. WM. PITT.

Lyme, January 1, 1805.

My dear Pitt,

I heard lately from Samuel Thornton of his having an interview with you concerning the collectorship at Hull ; and I have ever since been rather uneasy, lest, from not exactly taking, or quite accurately representing my meaning, in that part of the transaction in which *you* come into question, he may have exhibited to you (unintentionally of course) a false notion of my sentiments and feelings. I will not make speeches ; but I can truly assure you, that so far as you are personally concerned, there is scarcely any man living of whom I would more freely ask, or could more satisfactorily re-

ceive any favour; but being connected with a county which used to be estimated by Sir George Savile at about one-eighth or one-ninth of all England, unless I had laid down to myself the rule of declining to ask favours for my constituents, there never would have been a week in which I should not have had to pester you with some solicitation or other; and I am sure your own feelings will instruct you that this would have been a situation equally destructive of all political independence, or (what I value highly in your case) all personal comfort, and the continuance of that friendly connection, which (though I have never, I believe, said so civil a thing to you before) I esteem as a source of high honour to myself, and of great satisfaction. Even with my rule, I have at one time or other been asked for favours by most of my chief Yorkshire friends, but they have always most honourably acquiesced with good humour in my declining to oblige them. But the case would have been wholly different, if I had not had this rule to plead . . . Of course, all this time I except all those situations which, from their connection with the county or place he represents, every M. P. is naturally consulted about filling, from his supposed knowledge of the characters, &c. of the people of the place . . . I really have been uncomfortable ever since I heard of that interview with you, from the fear lest this had not been distinctly stated; and you will, therefore, excuse my taking up so much of your time as the explanation has required.

The distance of this place from London is such, that I cannot well (as I travel with all my family) get up in time for the House on Tuesday, if I set off on Monday. And as I don't like to stay a Sunday on the road, and never travel on Sunday, except in a case of *great* and unavoidable necessity, I should be forced to leave this place in the middle of next week, unless you could dispense with my attendance on the first day. In general, there is no question then, and of late there has been little conversation either, so that I think if I were up on Wednesday (the 16th) or Thursday, it would do very well. I write to you, because I know you won't summon me

up on the day (Tuesday) without necessity ; if it be really desirable that I should come, I certainly will (if it please God), but I have reasons connected with health and family convenience, for rather desiring to remain here as long as I can, and hope not to travel during this very severe weather : of course I myself should wish to be up, if a very full attendance were required ; and I only ask you, because of that you can best judge. Remember there is nobody here to copy after my example. I have often heard of you, and was in hopes, from the papers, you were taking a little Bath water before the meeting. I trust Lord Harrowby goes on well. I am much interested for him.

Believe me sincerely yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. One single line or even word (stay or come\*) will do.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO M. B.

London, February 1, 1805.

My dear Friend,

Poor ——'s letter is really dark and black beyond all degrees of darkness ; if there were not certain chinks through which the light breaks in, and shows that the sombre hue is not so much the natural complexion of the incidents she relates, as that which arises from the temper of the relater. When we are becoming the prey of these minor troubles, it is a good plan to look from home (so to express it,) and to fix our eyes on those who are suffering the real solid evils of life. A poor woman is just gone from me, whose husband and child, about four years ago, were forced by *starving* into St. Giles's Workhouse. There they both died of fever, and the woman herself caught the disease. The physician from whom I heard the melancholy tale, being told there was somebody ill in the house, tried to get in

\* Vide Mr. Pitt's answer, *Life of Wilberforce*.



by knocking, but no one coming to the door, he forced his way in, and found this poor woman delirious, and three or four children about her. Last night I saw her again for the first time since that dreadful season. She had fallen into debt for rent, the parish having almost taken away the allowance for her three children, and was in imminent danger of having all her goods seized. On inquiring how she maintained herself, I found it was by going out every night about eleven, and selling saloop till morning to hackney-coachmen, and others who keep unreasonable hours. Yet really this poor woman was not plaintive.

I did not mean to tell you so long a story, but it forced itself on my pen. Remember, my dear friend, concerning all those petty difficulties which may molest you, that ten years hence it will signify very little how the points may have been determined, one way or the other; and never harass yourself more than enough on any principle of economy, but remember, that to spend seven shillings' worth of health and spirits, in order to save four shillings' worth of silver, is a most extravagant proceeding. Above all, learn to cast your care on God, who careth for you; in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, letting your requests be made known unto Him. Our blessed Lord knows our infirmities, for He has felt them, and therefore He is the more disposed to bear with them, or rather we may be the more assured of His thus graciously sympathizing with us. \* \* \* \* \*

SIR C. MIDDLETON, BART. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Teston, April 15, 1805.

My dear Friend,

From a perusal of the papers I sent you, it is plain, that in our best days of promises, the good of the public was a very weak stimulus in the minds of ministers.

Had it been otherwise, the committees that have been

formed for the ostentatious purposes of reform would not have been wanted.

I have seen a very intimate friend of poor Lord Melville's since we parted. He has seen all his private papers; and he assures me, that independent of the Admiralty, he has not at this moment more than 2000*l.* per annum clear.

I do therefore hope you will use your good offices in breaking the fall of this poor man, and prevent the persecution with which he is pursued by an unfeeling opposition.

Let it be considered, that however guilty in the present instance, the public has suffered no loss, and when we consider the many years he has devoted to the service of his country with indefatigable zeal, it ought to weigh largely in the scale of public justice.

Keep all this in mind, and his present sufferings. Any kindness from you will be greatly valued.

I feel for him most tenderly, and although I approve of the sentence, I cannot help lamenting the effect it will have on naval matters.

Yours, very affectionately,

CHAS. MIDDLETON.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LADY WALDEGRAVE.

London, April 15, 1805.

My dear Lady W.

I can truly declare amid all the hurley-burley of the scene in which I have been bearing a part, I was often in heart at Navestock; and could I have transported myself thither with a thought, your Ladyship would have had a personal proof of my remembrance. During our late Parliamentary warfare, my private business accumulated on me, so that I now have at my elbow a formidable pile of letters unanswered, and many of them unread. But friendship at least in this holiday season shall have the precedence of business, and before I begin to reply to my Yorkshire correspondents, I

will send your Ladyship a few lines; not that I have anything to say, which will not already have occurred to you, but you appeared to wish to hear from me, and I myself feel desirous of pouring forth a part of the effusions to which your late domestic incidents naturally give rise.

I will frankly own that I can borrow one of your own expressions, and say that I was also "surprised at the awful calamity."\* And yet I know not why, because we can see so little of the designs and purposes of the Almighty, that it is the grossest presumption in us short-sighted creatures of a day to conceive that He will or will not act in any particular manner. Perhaps the sentiment in which my surprise bottomed (to be quite unreserved) was, that you had already suffered so much, that it was utterly unlikely that another stroke scarcely less severe than any of the former should succeed. But when we resort to our Bible, (and where else can we go, either for wisdom or consolation?) we find any such sentiment suppressed on its first rising, by the most plain and positive assurances, that "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth;" that these visitations, however grievous for a time, are often productive of everlasting benefit and joy; that God can even in this life more than compensate for any earthly loss, by the consolations of His spirit, by "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Nor are we in the present instance left so much in the dark as not to see many at least probable and apparent ends which this afflicting dispensation may have been intended to answer. And in all such cases it is our primary duty to ask ourselves what effect the stroke may have been designed to produce in me? Of what good consequences may it be rendered the instrument? And then we should set ourselves in earnest (vigorously I mean) to the production of these consequences and effects. We are assured that "God is love," that He does not willingly afflict the children of men. Indeed, to say nothing

\* The death of her daughter.

of the blessings He is daily dispensing to a forgetful and ungrateful world, (what human patience would thus endure ?) His giving up His own Son to endure all He underwent on earth, that He might thereby deliver as many as would repent and believe in Him from eternal misery, and procure for them never-ending happiness, is a proof of love so decisive, that it is no wonder the Apostle dwells on it so confidently. It is indeed a demonstration of such unspeakable love, that we cannot doubt of God's readiness to grant us all other blessings, just as He on earth, who should be ready to lay down His life for us, would certainly not refuse us any small and trifling favour. Well, therefore, may St. Paul say, "He that spared not His own son," &c., "how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things."

But I insist upon this topic because in truth we are all of us sadly deficient here: we do not, if I may use such an expression, give God and our Redeemer half credit enough for love, and kindness, and sympathy. I have no doubt, much as your Ladyship may have lately felt for your daughter, that they feel for you and yours still more; but then there is this grand difference—you can see but a few links of the great chain of events, God sees the whole; He contemplates at once all the innumerable consequences, which, striking off, as lines from the centre, result from every particular event when taken in all their extent, complication and variety. He therefore discerns an effect, which to our organs is not merely remote, but absolutely invisible, and yet perhaps an effect, which, if we could take it into account, would at once take away all our surprise, and render an incident which may have most astonished us perfectly natural. And all this becomes still more intelligible, when we take also into account what we are in practice sadly apt to forget—that the salvation of a single soul is in the Divine estimate of more importance than the temporal fate of empires; I mean in the latter case, abstracting all reference to spiritual and eternal consequences. Suppose some person, whose very name is unknown to you, brought to serious reflection, by such a striking exhibition of the un-



certainty of all human things, as your family has lately afforded. Suppose some mother, whose own endeavours may henceforth be directed to her daughter's or family's eternal interests instead of their temporal advancement. Your Ladyship will follow the train of ideas which I have just introduced to you; but there are, as I said lately, some by no means improbable ends in this very dispensation, which we ourselves can discover. Of course I speak here with diffidence; yet so far as general principles go I cannot be wrong.

I humbly trust, and firmly believe, that the Almighty has graciously received you into the number of His people: your prayers have been fervently poured forth for dear Lady Maria's eternal happiness; and indeed I trust she was herself in such a state of acceptance with God, as may justly lead us to hope with humble confidence, that to her "Death is gain." But would it have been always so? That is a question we cannot answer. I am no predestinarian, and do not believe that the children of God can never fall away; and how do we know but that the cares of life might have choked the word, to use our blessed Saviour's own expression, to the diminution at least, if not to the forfeiture and loss of her eternal happiness. I can imagine that Lady Maria would have had several very serious obstacles to her religious advancement to contend with.

But I must not particularize: my letter will otherwise grow into a pamphlet, and I must hasten to another topic—I mean the effect the incident is likely to have, at least is calculated to have, on the survivors, especially on poor Mr. M.; there is scarcely any providential dispensation which is so often rendered the instrument of producing a happy effect on the hearts of men as the death of friends. I have known several who ascribe to it their own conversion. May the striking proof Mr. M. has had of the precariousness of all human enjoyments wean his mind from this world, and lead him to fix his heart on that inheritance which will never fail those who take it for their portion!

I enter into all your Ladyship's feelings for Lord W.

and Mr. M., and indeed I can truly say I sympathize with you in them. Most true it is, as Mr. M. himself says, that a man may be as good a Christian when a soldier, as in any other line of life. The Holy Scriptures themselves contain some very encouraging confirmations of this position, and some most striking instances of its truth have been afforded of late years. Colonel Gardiner, in the whole of his story, appears to have been one of the most extraordinary proofs of the mercy of God, and of the efficacy of His grace, that ever was vouchsafed to men. Yet it cannot be denied that a military life, if not more unfavourable to religion than most others, (which I believe it to be in our days, for reasons I would specify but for want of time,) is yet beset with dangers, and has some peculiar temptations, or rather has them in a peculiarly great degree. If the state of the age in religion and morals be compared with that of our great-grandfathers (I speak of a century ago,) it appears to me that there is now less of many of the grosser vices, and that morality is better understood; but the grand peculiar evil of the present day is practical infidelity. How little are the Holy Scriptures read, how little are they understood. I do not, however, mean that people in general are professed sceptics, or that they know themselves to be such. Many who in a general way believe the Bible to be of divine original, do not believe many of the great truths which it inculcates. There is at bottom, in the higher ranks especially, a profane self-sufficiency; and this produces a great indifference to religion. Honour is, in fact, the god of our idolatry; and where a character is formed on this basis, there is too generally a deep and real, though, perhaps, a disguised contempt for that lowliness and meekness of which our blessed Saviour exhibited so bright a specimen, and which the Apostles so strongly enforce on all His followers. Pride, pride is the universal passion; and yet pride is the vice which, in its essential nature and appropriate effects, is the most opposite to the genius and spirit of real Christianity. The true Christian's habitual temper must be a temper of humility;

for he must daily prostrate himself at the foot of the Cross, and, acknowledging his unworthiness, must ask for pardon and grace to help him in his need; depending for both on his connection with the Saviour (I can scarcely keep from enlarging). But to return to my point. It is obvious that the principle of honour is even more absolute in the military class than in any other, and, therefore, that the peculiar danger of our times is that to which military men are peculiarly exposed. Still we must have military men, and, indeed, the strictest principles of self-defence call for an increase of them. My inference therefore is, that additional watchfulness is required, and additional firmness;—to dare to be singular, is always one of the greatest efforts of courage; but for a soldier to be singular, requires a still larger share of it. May the Almighty grant to your prayers (and I have the highest persuasion of the efficacy of prayer) the preservation of those who must ever be so dear to your Ladyship, from the contagion to which they will be exposed.

But, alas! the evil or rather danger is aggravated by another circumstance, that, in our days, nominal assumes the place and rank of real Christianity, and your Ladyship's young soldiers will hear the religion of the New Testament and the Reformation stigmatized with the title of methodism, enthusiasm, and other such disgraceful names; yet we are assured (and God cannot lie or change) that if we use the means of grace, prayer, and the reading of the Scriptures with honesty of mind, we shall be led into all truth, and carried safely through this dangerous world to that state of peace and joy which will be no less lasting in duration than perfect in degree. To these great duties, then, I would earnestly recommend your Ladyship to press your young men; and happy would it be, if they would now gratify you by promising to adhere to them steadily. A habit of this sort, once formed, will not be easily broken, and it is invaluable. I would particularly recommend the perusal of the New Testament—of all of it, I mean; for it is by a strange and most unhappy perverseness of

judgment (if it be not owing to the heart) that many who read and contend for the perusal of the Gospels, especially of the three first, seem to think they may, without much loss, neglect the Epistles and the Acts—and in fact St. John's Gospel also comes in for its share of neglect. Whereas, if people would consider the subject seriously and scripturally, they must allow, that the Epistles having been written after the Holy Spirit was poured forth in larger measure, and when the whole system of Christianity, and especially its peculiar doctrines, were more fully and particularly explained; *we* therefore ought to look to *them*—the Epistles and Acts, I mean—for the views of religion (especially of its doctrines, and of their application to practice) which we are bound to take, and the practical principles by which we ought to be actuated. I need not, I am sure, in writing to your Ladyship, vindicate myself from the charge of underrating any part of the Word of God—it is all of divine original and authority: but just as more was revealed in our Saviour's days than in those of Moses or of David, so more was revealed after our Saviour's ascension into heaven than before it. I will merely add, on this head, that I may mention as a striking illustration and proof of my position, that whereas, before our Saviour's death, Christians had asked nothing in His name,—after his Ascension, all our petitions were to be offered up in His name, and through His mediation and intercession. And can a greater change (a practical change, I mean) be well imagined.

This is a subject on which, for some years, I have been thinking of writing, and I still hope to effect it.

May I also recommend to my young friends . . . if they will allow me to call them so, whose title can only be founded on the interest I take in their happiness . . . the practice of comparing one passage of Scripture with another in important cases. Having gone so far, I will take the liberty of pressing for the perusal of either Doddridge or Witherspoon on Regeneration. They are both excellent works, and there are also three excellent sermons on the same subject by Archbishop



Tillotson. It will be remembered that Doddridge, though a Dissenter himself, was a confidential friend of bishops, and of the most respected friends of the establishment. But I must have tired your Ladyship's patience; and finding myself as far almost as when I began, from exhausting all I had to say to you, I will for the present lay down my pen, with assurances of the most cordial sympathy and friendship.

I hope it will not be very long before we may have the pleasure of seeing your Ladyship among us; and trusting to your Ladyship's and their acceptance of a cordial reception, as a compensation for any defects in ceremony, I add that Mrs. W. and I shall be happy to see Lord W. and Mr. M. with your Ladyship, whenever they may be so disposed; and Broomfield, to which we hope we are soon going, shall not be so preoccupied as to render it impossible for us to receive them.

For the present, my dear Lady W., accept Mrs. W.'s and my own sincere and warm wishes for your own present and eternal happiness, and that of all who are dear to you. THAT includes all the rest; and therefore I will only add, that I am, with truth,

Your Ladyship's faithful and  
Affectionate Friend,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I regret to have been so extremely hurried as I have been during the last half-hour: but you will excuse it; and in truth it has been a great effort to secure for your Ladyship so much time in any way. For the books—let me know if you wish for any more. The account of the gallant Scotch regiment under Monro, was the book of which I begged Lord W.'s acceptance; and I only beg, that if ever he should part with it, it may be to me, because I don't know that I can get another copy, and I value it very highly. It is a very extraordinary performance, and the antiquity of the style and manners are, like the costume in the old paintings, great additions to the effect. Poor Bennet Langton, I remember, was in raptures with it.

I had some other sentiments to express, but could not put them down now, and my unanswered letters are multiplying daily, even during the recess, instead of being cleared away. I am a general bankrupt.

Poor Lord Melville! I find I am abused extremely, especially by the ladies;—but let them be a little serious.

JOHN GISBORNE, ESQ. TO W. WILBEFORCE, ESQ.

Holly Bush, near Burton, April 17, 1805.

Dear Sir,

As your Easter vacation is arrived, I venture to trouble you with a letter upon a subject which has of late been very frequently in my thoughts, and concerning which I really feel much anxiety. When my friend Dr. Randolph (with whom I know you are acquainted) was here in the summer of 1803, he gave me an extremely interesting account of his interview with the late Lord Rosslyn at Bath, and though you may be in full possession of the particulars to which I now allude, yet I feel assured that you will not be displeased with my just running over the chief of them. The Doctor had no acquaintance with Lord R. before his Lordship's last visit to Bath, and probably they would never have been acquainted, but for the happy circumstance of Lady Rosslyn's regular attendance at Laura Chapel. One morning after service, her Ladyship requested with much earnestness, that he (the Doctor) would call on her Lord, as she very much wished them to be acquainted; intimating pretty strongly, if my memory does not deceive me, that she hoped the Doctor would seize every opportunity of introducing religion in the course of their conversation. The Doctor complied, and during the first four or five of their interviews, his Lordship eagerly entered upon the proofs, external and internal, of Christianity; and, to use Randolph's own expression, "invariably took the infidel side of the question." His Lordship managed his arguments, I believe, with much dexterity, and Randolph confessed

that he never found himself more closely pressed. Lord R., however, was in perfect temper, and appeared evidently on the search for truth, which subsequent circumstances served fully to prove. After several interviews his Lordship requested Dr. R. to recommend to him some eminent work upon the divinity of Christ, and Burgh's Answer to Lindsey was accordingly put into his hands. This book (which I have never seen,) under the blessing of God, seems to have been the one thing needful: for his Lordship repeatedly avowed his entire change of views and the extinction of his doubts, from the serious perusal of this work. He then expressed his anxiety that Dr. Randolph should write to Burgh, requesting that the work might be reprinted, and that a preface might be inserted by him addressed to his Lordship, declaratory of his Lordship's delight, gratitude, &c. &c. Lord Rosslyn also declared that he especially wished such a preface to be inserted, from the ardent hope that it might awaken curiosity in the minds of his law brethren, and thus excite their desire to peruse a work which had accomplished such a change in his own breast. Surely all this is delightful and satisfactory. When Lord R. was preparing to leave Bath, he took leave of Randolph in these words: "I thank you cordially for all your visits; I came to Bath an Infidel, but I return from it a real Believer." Being in possession of these facts, and Lord Rosslyn being no more, I wrote lately to Randolph, requesting him, if he had no objection, to relate the interesting particulars of his interviews with the late Lord Rosslyn, in a suitable letter to the editor of the Christian Observer, as I trusted they would thus get into circulation, and be of use. My friend thus replies to my request: "You are perfectly correct with regard to Lord Rosslyn; and the remembrance of what passed is now most pleasing. I care not how often the story be told; but as no attack has been made on his religious principles, I do not think myself authorized to volunteer the detail." I confess that, under all the circumstances, I do not see why Randolph should feel any scruple about volunteering the detail; and as to

my friend's remark upon no attack having been made on his Lordship's religious principles, I can only say that the generality of people believe he had none.

Had not the subject of this letter been apparently of some moment, I should have long ago offered many apologies for so intruding upon your time; and I must even now express a concern that I have not been able to compress what I had to say in a narrower compass.

I remain, dear Sir,

Your much obliged and obedient

J. GISBORNE.

SIR CHAS. MIDDLETON, BART. TO WM. WILBERFORCE,  
ESQ.

Admiralty, April 24, 1805.

My dear Friend,

I received an express from Mr. Pitt on Monday, acquainting me that he had the King's permission to offer me a peerage, and the place of first Lord of the Admiralty, which I have accepted. I have seen him since I came to town, and he will acquaint his Majesty to-morrow with my acceptance.

The task is a very arduous one, and under present circumstances, beyond conception hazardous. I shall hope for the prayers of my friends, and do the best I can in the post wherein God has through his providence placed me.

You say too true of poor Lord Melville. Remember me where you are, and believe me,

Very affectionately yours,

CHARLES MIDDLETON

P. S. I don't leave town till Friday morning.



W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO REV. THOMAS GISBORNE,  
SCARBOROUGH.

Broomfield, July 30, 1805.

My dear Gisborne,

Never surely was there so *abstemious* a correspondent, or one who so studiously guarded (Mr. Stephen nevertheless always excepted) against being drawn into loquacity, by the wretched scrap of paper to which he committed his scantlings. Of Mr. Boutflower I have often heard, and always very favourably; but I never have been at Scarborough since I knew his character. I wish you to become acquainted with him, to put him on considering whether there is any way in which the cause of religion and morals may be promoted by my aid. Does he want books or tracts? Are they wanted at Scarborough? What is the general character of the clergy thereabouts? and, in short, be so good as to obtain all the information you can; and if any thing be worth communicating, *candidus imperti*. You see I am providing you matter, pitying the barrenness of the soil, and ascribing to that, more than to the indolence of the reaper, that he scarce sends a gleanings worth to a distant friend, who is hungering after hearing from you. . .

I hope you are all well. I thank God we are; but this sadly crowded place will not let me pay off my arrear of letters, and fall to something more productive. You will retort, Why, then, worry me with an epistle of three sides in return for a short note? Well, that I may not strengthen that argument, I will hasten to a conclusion, and with kind remembrances to Mrs. G. and Mary, subscribe myself,

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MR. NORTON.\*

Broomfield, August 13, 1805.

My dear Sir,

It is not without great pain that I find you are

\* Teyoninhokarawen, a Mohawk chief.

about to return to your own country, whither you will carry along with you the esteem and friendly attachment of myself, and I believe of all who have had the opportunity of becoming well acquainted with you. May that Providence which brought you to this country protect and guide you, and render you the favoured instrument of much good to your countrymen. It is this last consideration, indeed, which chiefly reconciles me to the idea of losing you; and I take this occasion of assuring you, that I shall be truly happy if any opportunities occur, of lending my little aid towards the production of the same end; and I beg you will always call on me to co-operate with you in this way, whenever you think I or my friends can be of any service.

It is probable that, circumstanced as you are at this moment, you may feel some reluctance about applying again to government for any pecuniary supplies, and therefore my friends Mr. H. and Rt. Thornton, and Mr. Sharpe, to whom I know I may add Mr. Barclay, hope you will allow us to present you with the trifling testimony of our friendly regard, which I now enclose.

Farewell, my dear Sir; I trust you will not forget your English friends, as, believe me, they will not be unmindful of you. And you will especially be remembered in the prayers of him who is,

My dear Sir,

With cordial esteem and regard,

Very sincerely and affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

MR. NORTON TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Falmouth, August 29, 1805.

My dear Sir,

Providence pleasing that we should not leave the British shores abruptly, (the wind being right ahead ever since we were abreast of Portland, which has obliged us to put in here, where some of our convoy were waiting for us,) friendship and gratitude urges

me again to communicate to you, before I leave the island.

Since we passed Portland we have been continually tacking, and beating up against the wind. We saw and saluted the King in his pleasure yacht off Weymouth. When we passed Sidmouth I thought of our friend Lord Teignmouth, and wished I had been able to have stept on shore, and have taken farewell of him. It is pleasing to see how God with your navy protects your shores, no enemy dares approach while their coasts are encompassed with your ships; it calls to my recollection our situation with the Americans, before the peace of 1795; that while we hunted on their frontiers, they could not, with safety, leave their fortifications.

Although I cannot say I return home with pleasure while any thing like an invasion is expected, yet I really have that confidence in your navy, that if it should be attempted, I think; with God's aid, it will not leave many laurels to be reaped by those on land; and that the proud invaders will hardly reach your shores except for their further humiliation;—what gives me most apprehension is the subtlety of your adversary, who by procrastination may blunt your vigilance at the same time that he is increasing his means and inuring his people to run away at sea, and to those who are not accustomed to conquer, the escaping is gaining a half victory.

I feel extremely indebted to Lord Barham for the kind favour he has granted me of a passage in this frigate, in which I certainly see a very pleasing specimen of the British navy. Discipline regular and strict, at the same time preserved with the greatest mildness and moderation—it resembles more what is practised among our tribes, than from description I had reason to imagine. Commands are given with an energy concordant with circumstances, that generally ensures a ready obedience. (I must, however, observe, that our warriors, in common, are generally treated with that deference shown midshipmen); but the regular system of discipline is a sufficient remedy for any inconvenience that might

arise in your service from the variety of characters of the lower ranks that are necessarily admitted therein; the blustering language and imprecations, which I have heard in merchant vessels, have never here assailed my ears; all this profane and useless appendage to commands seems here wisely to be laid aside.

I am indebted to Captain Pelly for every degree of attention to render my situation as comfortable as possible; fortunately I have not been at all sea-sick this time; and as we were eight days at sea, I think I am now seasoned. The printing press which the watermen said was too large for their wherries to take, the captain was so good as to send his boat for; so that all is on board.

Please present my sincere respects to Mrs. Wilberforce; remember me to all our Clapham friends; for though I cannot at the same time write to all, yet certainly my heart warms to all your worthy acquaintance, the remembrance of whose friendship will ever convey pleasure, as their society did instruction, to my mind.

Your faithful friend and humble servant,

JOHN NORTON.

Teyoninhokarawen.

WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. H. MORE.

Near London, October 2, 1805.

My dear Friend,

Our friend Lord Barham is doing as well as possible in the main, and instead of there being any want of vigour he is really the member of the Administration in whom that quality, tempered with judgment, and guarded by foresight, may be found in the most abundant measure. But I fear he a little too much worries Mr. Pitt, who must have been more than human not to have suffered a little (truly he has suffered less than almost any other person would have done in his circumstances) from the servility and suppleness which have



been observed toward him, even by those from whom better things might have been expected, considering their birth and connections. But there are great vulgar as well as little vulgar; and it is not superiority of understanding either, which exempts from the influence of this baseness of spirit.

I was not forgetful of what you said about the —— family; but I fear we have all been too sanguine in our hopes in that quarter. O how forcibly is the passage impressed on us, "How hardly shall they that have riches," &c.. Alas! the religion of these people is too apt to be a dress which is put off or on, and is more or less exposed to view according to the company they are in. With you, or even with me, they are religious; but with others, their religion is of a very accommodating quality. I called a few days ago on ——, but I could not turn the conversation to any thing really useful. How often am I reminded of a simple Yorkshire man, a youth of great natural shrewdness and strong sense, under a gawky exterior, who, exciting in me some surprise, by telling me that at Cambridge, where I knew he had done good, he used to proceed cautiously, and especially begin warily, instead of rushing at once into the midst of things:—I went on to inquire what had been these distant gradual approaches. "Why," says he, "I generally began, Sir, by telling them of the new birth, and asking them if they could think they had experienced it." Alas! in a dozen visits I fear I should scarcely get so far, though, by the way, it is no more than your due to say, that I have often respected the courage with which you, on occasions of this sort, have often advanced to the storm, instead of stopping at the first and second parallels.

We have been much alarmed about our little baby, and these infantiles soon begin to twine their little cords round our hearts. My time has been sadly engrossed with a variety of domestic cares. In short, I remember Lord Bacon, and—who was the other? was it not Sir Thomas Moore? who used to speak of the demand of domestic assiduities.

I have still a budget full of matter for you, durst I but untie the thongs; but I must resist the impulse.

What a critical state of public affairs! and what a comfort to reflect that a higher power directs all the secret springs, and, whatever may be the fate of empires, will cause all to work together for good to them that love him.

O my friend, I sometimes think that were I without religion I should almost be tempted to take the shortest course out of life, in order to see beyond the narrow limits which have circumscribed our view, just as one would cut open a child's toy to inspect the interior machinery. Well—the day will come, and I humbly trust we shall there meet (Oh, what a blessed idea!) all who love God and one another, freed from pain, and sickness, and sorrow, and all our little infirmities and drawbacks, and shall part no more for ever. Do you remember this sublimely pictured out in M'Laurin, in his essay on the Communion of the Saints? His vile creeping style is quite elevated into sublimity by the grandeur of the ideas. Kind remembrances.

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

DEAN OF CARLISLE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Queen's College, October 24, 1805.

My dear Friend,

I have known two Dissenters of Queen's; one was one of the Eggintons of Hull, and the other one Sidney Hollis Foy, a youth recommended here by Jebb, and who came under the auspices, I think, of that Brent Hollis Smith, or some such name (a red-hot republican twenty-five years ago,) who nevertheless was fined, and perhaps confined about some Wilkite or bribery affair in elections. I am not clear, yet the thing was notorious, and you may remember it. I had a pupil also who now occurs to me, a very decent man, Rogers; his father was a banker near London, or in London, about twenty-five years ago.

I never heard of the smallest inconvenience and difficulty they were put to, nor of any rudeness they met with. Indeed, the things were hardly known. Again, Harrison, our fellow, came as a Quaker, and from a Quaker's family; but then all these conformed, and Dissenters must conform in going to chapel, and also in going to Sacrament.

In regard to going to Sacrament, I remember that Egginton's parents desired he might be excused: the matter was examined into, and my predecessor very properly returned for answer that no dispensation could be given, as it certainly cannot consistently with our institutions. However, if nothing is said about it, the non-attendance would probably be connived at a good deal.

A Dissenter cannot properly be matriculated, and so become a member of the University, for I think he now declares, at matriculation, that he is *bonâ fide* a member of the Church of England.

After all, I am not fond of having to do with persons of this class.

I am yours affectionately,  
I. MILNER.

WM. WILBERFORCE. ESQ. TO HENRY BANKES, ESQ.

Broomfield, October 25, 1805.

My dear Bankes,

You and I\* (Mr. Hatsell) have been so long in the habit of comparing notes with each other on political subjects, and, in general, to my great satisfaction our views and opinions have been so much the same, that I always feel disposed to communicate to you any intelligence I hear which is worth your receiving. I can scarcely be said now to have any thing to state answerable to the expectations you might form from the

\* A proverbial allusion with Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Bankes to a mode of expressing himself employed by Mr. Hatsell.

above beginning ; but having seen Pitt on Wednesday, I meant to give you a general notion of the effect produced on me by our conversation, and you would probably have had a much longer letter, had I been able to take up my pen yesterday as I intended. But exposure to a bitter east wind brought on one of my feverish attacks, and I was the whole of yesterday confined to my bed ; to-day, I thank God, I am much better, but only just dressed (half-past two o'clock,) and not in very good writing trim. I shall therefore be a shorter, if I am also a duller correspondent than I should have been twenty-four hours ago. But 1st, you will like to know for certain what I find is only just now certainly determined (indeed, scarcely certainly according to Pitt's language,) that parliament is not to meet till the second week in January.

2. The newspapers will have excited in your mind the same fears they have called forth in mine, that Buonaparte has been too rapid for the Austrians. I understand government say that the Austrians did not expect Buonaparte would violate the Prussian territory, or that they would be so soon in their immediate neighbourhood. I own I have no patience with them. Did they not know that celerity was Buonaparte's chief excellence ? Did they not believe he would not be very scrupulous in violating any territory for a great object ? Pitt seems confident that the force of the confederates, taken together, is considerably greater than what Buonaparte has to oppose to them. But I cannot help fearing, from the accounts the papers give us, that the French have penetrated so far as to get between the Russians who were coming forward and the Austrians. If so, there may be sad work, and surely we must say the result of unpardonable negligence ; for any man of common sense, knowing that 80 or 100,000 Russians were coming on to his aid, would have made the junction of his force with them as clear as possible. In the present state of things, one is led even more than ever before to the conclusion, that if Prussia would join, the result would probably be favourable. In this case,



the French might pay dearly for having advanced so far. And Pitt is using the utmost endeavours to induce the King of Prussia to join the confederacy. Lord Harrowby is going over to Berlin for this purpose. He is much respected among the foreign ministers, as I know from good authority, and I believe a fitter man could not be found for the mission.

I find ideas have been started, which have been floating in my own mind, that any arrangement by which Prussia should be put in possession of Holland, with a sufficient barrier to defend it against France, would tend much, as matters now stand, to the security of this country, though somehow I feel a repugnance to our being parties to any of those arrangements which have at all the air of partitioning the territories of weaker states among stronger. Yet the independence of Holland, or, if that cannot be accomplished, the bringing Holland from the possession of France, is really a British object; a point of extreme importance to us. I cannot help fearing, that if the French should have got between the Austrians and Russians, the great autocrat of all the Russias will think himself ill-treated, and this may produce a quarrel between the allies. Our government seems to have made great efforts, and with considerable success so far as preparations go. P. says we have a disposable army of 60,000 men. I thought he seemed less sanguine than he used to be, and was glad to think him so. I never compared notes with you on one point on which I thought he was a little tender. I mean, there being no offer of negotiating and making peace on certain stated terms, before the actually engaging in a joint war in alliance with the continental powers. This is conceived to be sufficiently explained (and I am not sure it may not be so, by the letter which recalled Novoziltzoff on Buonaparte's making himself king of Italy). It might be necessary to the preservation of our cordiality with Russia, to acquiesce in their determinations; and any hesitation to take up the matter in as high a tone as their own might have been dangerous. I more and more see reason to admire the wis-

dom of Chancellor Oxenstiern's famous apophthegm\* :—*Mi fili nescis quam parvâ sapientia regitur mundus.* The Austrians' beginning of the war very much resembles some of the great Mack's former achievements. I must break off—indeed I have given you enough for a short letter. Let me, however, thank you for some very good game, which was very acceptable, and inquire after your young people and Mrs. Bankes.

Believe me, my dear B.,  
ever affectionately yours,  
W. WILBERFORCE.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO THE RT. HON. WM. PITT.

(Private.)

Broomfield, Oct. 25, 1805.

My dear Pitt,

I was taking up my pen to say to you something which I thought of just after we parted on Wednesday, when another idea occurred to me, which I will mention first, lest you should think me like some others I have heard you mention, who pop out at last, or in a post-script, the real object of the visit or letter. It is, that if in the course of any of your calls for proper men to be employed in any diplomatic business you should be at a loss for one, you perhaps could not in the whole kingdom find any one in all respects so well qualified as the Mr Brougham whom I formerly mentioned to you. He speaks French as well as English, and several other languages. But the great thing is, that he is a man of uncommon talents and address, and for his age, twenty-six, knowledge also, and I told you of his being so long the advocate for your government in Edinburgh.

My mentioning him to you is entirely of my own head; of course he knows nothing of it, indeed, he is in

\* This speech is attributed to Sixtus Quintus by Sir Walter Raleigh, *Hist. of the World*, 1, 2, 21, § 6.

Edinburgh, and I only do it (most solemnly I assure you) on public grounds, and because I know you must often want men for foreign services. He has, besides the qualities I mentioned, great resolution, strength of constitution, &c. The idea of mentioning him to you arose in my mind when I was going to inform you, that in the course of his tour on the Continent last year, particularly at Vienna, Naples, &c., he found that all the foreign ministers to whom, especially at Vienna, he had good introductions, spoke of Lord Harrowby in the highest terms; in short, it was when I was speaking of Harrowby in the terms you know I should use, he declared, that it was surprising how little justice appeared to be done to him at home, or even by some of our own diplomatic and other English people abroad, compared with the estimation in which he was held among all foreigners of rank and consequence. He said much more of the same kind. I thought you would like to hear this; it made me the more rejoice at his undertaking the mission on which he is now embarking.

I am ever, my dear Pitt,

Yours most truly,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I need not say this requires no answer.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO JOHN JAY, ESQ.

Elmdon-House, near Birmingham,  
November 7th, 1805.

My dear Sir,

I am willing to flatter myself you have not quite forgotten the person who is now beginning to address you. He certainly has not forgotten you; on the contrary, he retains a lively recollection of the pleasure he derived from your society during your residence in this country, and still more of the benefit he received, especially on one important occasion, from your judicious and friendly counsel. He has never since ceased to

embrace every opportunity of inquiring after you, and to take an interest in your well-being.

After this preamble, I proceed to state, that my object in now taking up the pen is, to recommend earnestly to your serious perusal and impartial consideration, a pamphlet which I will take the liberty of transmitting to you, lately published, entitled "War in Disguise, or the Frauds of the Neutral Flag." It is spoken of in high terms by the most intelligent and respectable men I know, and is written, as I think you will agree with me, with considerable knowledge of its subject, as well as with great spirit and eloquence. Its general tenor is so clearly indicated by its title, at least to you who are experimentally acquainted with the topics of which it treats, that I need say nothing on that head; I will only beg leave to assure you, that I took it up with very strong prejudices against the conclusions which I understood the author endeavoured to establish, on account of the strong disposition I invariably feel to cultivate and promote a friendly connection between our two countries. I cannot but be anxious to hear what reception it meets with on your side of the Atlantic. That those whose interest is at stake will endeavour to raise a cry, is no more than what we must expect. Happy shall I be, if this is countervailed by the opposite opinion of men of sense, knowledge, and impartiality. Nothing could have brought me over to the doctrines the pamphlet lays down, but a deliberate and firm persuasion, that on our practical adoption of them (I would not hastily affirm to what extent) depends, according to all human appearances, not merely the maritime superiority, but the very existence of this empire. The author appears to me to have left very short that part of his work in which he speaks of the effects, on our marine and our maritime interests, of the continuance of the present abuses. The work, I happen to know, was written in haste, and in a bad state of health; and though the production of a man who was actuated by a sense of duty, and had taken great pains to inform himself, it is in some parts faulty, in the composition and



language especially; but knowing to whom I am writing, it would be mere impertinence to do more than introduce it to your notice. I leave it, not without solicitude, but yet with good hope, to your intelligence, experience, equity, and temper.

I heartily wish this may find you in the enjoyment of good health and personal comfort. You will not, I trust, think it improper egotism if, relying on your friendly remembrance, I add, that thank God I am favoured with great domestic felicity,—having a wife and five children, the youngest born only about two months ago. I should scarcely know where to leave off, if I allowed myself to touch on any of those numerous and interesting topics which press themselves on my attention while writing to you. I will, however, abstain from them all, and take my leave; assuring you that I am ever, with cordial esteem and regard, my dear sir,

Yours very sincerely,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. If you do me the favour to answer this letter, my address is always London.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO MRS. HANNAH MORE.

Broomfield, January 15, 1806.

Indeed, my dear friend, I must plead not guilty. What, you will say, before you are arraigned? Your very precipitation proves your criminality. But again I say, not guilty of the heavy charge of neglecting an absent friend, though I own appearances are against me. Could my noble spirit indeed have been satisfied with sending back, in return for your kind and interesting letter, a few short words, of pretty well and so forth, I might have written any day; but I wished to treat you better than that, and the consequence has been, what the boy and the filberts long ago preached to us.

First, to give you a little of our history. We sallied forth about the beginning of November, and the whole

house of Wilberforce took up their abode with the S.'s for one fortnight, and afterwards with G. for another. In reviewing the old haunts of my bachelor days with such a troop at my heels, how often was I led to adopt the good old patriarch's exclamation, "With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands." It is a gratifying circumstance to find our friends advancing in the most important matters; in those indeed which are alone of any real importance. There was always in our friend that godly sincerity, which is a sure prognostic of future proficiency, and it is truly delightful to see his humility, his spirituality and indifference to this world's great things, his love of all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and all this without any impeachment of his cheerfulness or companionableness—a most *cacophonous* denomination Dr. Parr would say; but, good doctor, find me a better, of course I mean in English, for you would, I doubt not, either find or make me a more smoothly going epithet in Greek.

But to return to ——— with you; a fortnight soon rolled away and transferred us to the Temple, where our kind friends the Babingtons received us with their accustomed cordiality; there, also, I had not been for many years before. By the way, to return your story of the good deeds of bishops with another: a Mr. Vaughan of Leicester, the Doctor's brother, wrote to the Inspecting Officer of the district, who had appointed either Sunday or the Thanksgiving day, I forget which, for an inspection of the Leicester Volunteers, to beg him to change the day; the officer returning no answer, Vaughan wrote to the Bishop of Lincoln, his diocesan, sending a copy of his letter, and explaining the case. On this the Bishop himself wrote a very proper letter to the Duke of York, deprecating the appointing inspections, &c., on Sundays, &c. The Duke, in his answer, observed that Parliament seemed rather to have intimated to the military, that such things should be on the Sunday. To be sure, the true place for the bishops to have made their objections was the House of Lords, where, however, not a tongue was wagged against the detestable provision; and Pitt,

alas! was the chief author of the mischief. London and Durham, to do them justice, were at a distance; and Canterbury superannuated, as I found when I went to lay the matter before him; for I really took great pains, and shrunk from no part of the combat, a circumstance on which I now reflect with pleasure; for the evil which is resulting from the drillings, inspectings, &c. on the Sunday, exceeds all calculation:—but to resume my story. The Bishop, after all, sent back to Vaughan his own letter, and the Duke of York's answer, with a civil note.—Poor Durham! what a commentary on the hollowness of all human grandeur and splendour, &c. Poor Pitt, too! I have been too poorly ever since he returned to get to see him, which I shall do as shortly as possible, but I fear he is very much shattered. I wonder his mind stands it; he must be ready to say, "This world was made for Cæsar."

I must break off, though I could keep writing till I had filled a quire; but time fails. I must stop, though with difficulty. You must not expect to hear from me soon again, as I have many letters, and am deep in arrears to various lines of business. Farewell. Mrs. W. desires to send her love to you and all the sisterhood.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

LORD WELLESLEY TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Park Lane, January 24, 1806.

My dear Wilberforce,

I have been so distressed for some days by the dreadful calamity which has fallen upon us, that I have not had spirits sufficient to enable me either to call upon you, or to write to you. But I am sincerely and warmly sensible of your great kindness, and of the particular cordiality of your very friendly and affectionate note, to which, perhaps, I could scarcely plead a claim, after so long an apparent neglect of the kind letters which I received from you in India. I trusted, however, much to

your candour and justice, expecting that you would make great allowance for the extreme labour of my public situation, which for the last three years scarcely left me time even to write to my family, and obliged me to renounce all private correspondence.

I am extremely anxious to have the pleasure of seeing you, and of renewing our old friendship, which I assure you, I have retained in full force. When we meet, we shall have many melancholy events to deplore, and many dear friends to regret. But we must endeavour to discharge our duty towards our country with fortitude and perseverance, and to remedy what we could not prevent. I know nothing of public arrangements, and all the reports in the newspapers respecting myself are utterly groundless. To you I think it my duty to declare, that the memory of my ever-to-be-lamented friend, will always be the primary object of my veneration and attachment in public life, but that I will never lend my hand to sustain any system of administration, evidently inadequate to the difficulties and dangers of the crisis. I shall be most happy to labour in any way which may promise advantage to the public service; but having no personal objects of pursuit, I shall not easily be deluded from the solemn conviction of my mind, that our recent loss cannot be repaired, nor our imminent perils be averted, otherwise than by an union of the approved talents and highest characters of the nation.

I hope you will appoint an hour for meeting me, either at your own house or here, when I shall be most happy to obey your commands, and to satisfy you that I remain, my dear Wilberforce,

Ever yours most affectionately and sincerely,

WELLESLEY.

RALPH CREYKE, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bath, January 25, 1806.

My dear Sir,

I thank you much for your attention. The alarming rumours of Mr. Pitt's illness made me very



anxious to ascertain the truth, and therefore I took the liberty of breaking in upon your time, and requesting that you would answer my inquiry. Your letter checked all my expectation, and the eagerness of my hope; for I had seen him, for the first week after our arrival, walk every morning upon the South Parade, with what appeared to us a firm step. We all of us stole a peep at him from our window with admiration; and a principal article of intelligence to our friends in Yorkshire was, that we had seen Mr. Pitt. This was before the disastrous accounts came from the Continent. I knew that he had saved England, and fancied that I saw the saviour of Europe (and so he would have been, if success were always attendant upon good plans and great exertions.) He then appeared, in my eyes, the most elevated of human beings. What a sudden and an awful change! it is really a noonday eclipse. But when will that former light be relumined? I am not often in despair; but at present, I fear that the King will not know where to look for that Promethean heat—where to find a mind so pure in principle and in practice, endowed with such firmness, and capable of such active exertion. When we lose those whom we value and esteem, our memory dwells with pleasure upon every, even melancholy, circumstance that accompanies the close of their life; and I read with comfort the account given in all the papers, of Mr. Pitt's affectionate parting from his family, of his religious intercourse with the Bishop of Lincoln, and his patient resignation to the Divine Will. I shall ever revere his memory—for “standing between the dead and the living, and staying the plague” which, in the French Revolution, had infected the Continent, and might have spread and desolated this island. But I shall finish, for I have really been bewildered, and dreaming troublous dreams ever since this frightful event was announced.

I sincerely hope that you and Mrs. Wilberforce are in better health. The more quiet you can enjoy, the better; but I fear the neighbourhood of London cannot allow any great portion of that blessing to you in these bustling moments. Bath would be your best retreat;

especially if parliament is to be dissolved, as many believe likely, if the Grenville party come in. Your constituents would excuse your absence from the county, and your friends would manage the ceremony for you: of all this, however, you are the best judge. Perhaps I speak as I wish. Adieu. May health and happiness ever attend you!

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours most faithfully,

RALPH CREYKE.

DEAN OF CARLISLE TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Queen's College, Cambridge, February 6, 1806.  
Thursday morning.

My dear Sir,

The election\* is fixed for to-morrow in the forenoon; and such a number of old acquaintance keep dropping in upon me, that I think it best to take up my pen and answer yours of this morning immediately upon the receipt of it.

Independently of your several letters to me, the warmth with which we hear from all quarters that you espouse the cause of Lord H. Petty, creates considerable difficulties in the minds of several of us, who have been accustomed to look up to you with entire confidence, both as an upright and a wise pilot in the most tempestuous seasons. The effect of this present active warmth of yours has, to my certain knowledge, secured to his Lordship some voters, who are far from being easy now on account of the promises they have given. In regard to myself, you have also effectually stopped all my activity in opposition to Lord H. Petty. I have not influenced, much less brought up from the country, a single vote against him, though from my long residence and number of pupils public and private, you must be sure I have had a number of applications to know my wishes on this occasion.

\* Of a member for Cambridge in the room of Mr. Pitt.

But why not vote for him myself? In one word, because I fear he is likely to be hostile to some of those great constitutional principles which brought about the revolution in this country; and which, in my judgment, cannot be departed from without endangering the whole fabric of British liberty in church and state.

I must say, however, that Lord H. Petty conversed with me very fairly and candidly on the subject of the Catholic emancipation; and I like him much better for openly avowing the bias of his mind to be towards acceding to the emancipation, than if he had shuffled and evaded the question, as many canvassers in his situation would have done. But still I cannot bring myself either directly or indirectly to be aiding and abetting what I think so replete with danger. And, therefore, as I know you too well to suppose you would wish me to act in any respect contrary to my deliberate judgment, I have only to lament (as I do most poignantly) what a few weeks ago I should have pronounced almost impossible, viz. that a case should happen in politics where you and I should differ materially in practice.

But remember, it is quite as repugnant to the principles which I have long avowed to vote for an enemy of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, as it is, that I should throw a single grain into the scale of those who favour either the repeal of the Test Act, or of the emancipation of the Catholics; and as Lord Palmerston has not been quite so explicit on the head of the Abolition as I could wish, or as perhaps he or his friends may be in the course of this day, I remain even yet in doubt (near as the election is) whether I can conscientiously vote for him. He has, I understand, spoken decidedly as to the Test Act and the emancipation business; and if I could, to my satisfaction, make out that he also will be for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, I might, in my present state of mind, bring myself to give him my individual vote; but even that will cost me a severe pang, when I reflect that, in so doing, I go directly contrary to your earnest wishes and application.

On this point, of voting or not voting, I, at this moment, really do not feel competent to decide; but be assured, that no other application, or any thing else on earth but the merits of the question, as they appear to my judgment, will determine me after I have got all the information I can: and, moreover, whatever I do, I shall take most particular care to remain unpledged for the general election, which may happen very soon.

I do not think the real principles of the Roman Catholics are, in general, understood by persons of rank and distinction; and so I took the liberty of saying to Lord H. Petty. This is the first time I was ever not quite on your side, and I think you will forgive me,

As I am, dear Sir, yours most truly,

ISAAC MILNER.

#### DEAN OF CARLISLE TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Queen's College, Cambridge, February 7, 1806.  
Friday evening.

My dear Friend,

You will hate to see my letters; I am the messenger of such a number of disagreeable things. After all, I know not whether you will rejoice in the prevalence of whatever it is that brings in Lord H. Petty. Prevalent it is to a prodigious degree. I know not, indeed, whether the poll be actually closed; but, from appearances about two hours ago, I was told that he had more votes than the other two put together.

Last night, when I had expected to have spent a comfortable evening at my own house with La Trobe, and Dr. Jowett, and a young man or two, (all being engaged at eight o'clock to come and play the organ, sing, &c.) I was obliged to leave them all to attend to visitors and electioneers. There came in,

1. Harrison of our college, and two more, whom you don't know, all Lord H. Petty's and all Foxites.

2. Then came the two Westerns, both of this college. One is a member of the House of Commons, always a Foxite.



3. Robert Grant came in, and was precisely in my own situation, that is, determined against Lord H. Petty, but not convinced that Lord Palmerston would be sound as to the Slave Trade. But he had been talking a deal with him and his friends, and the result was, that he thought him quite sincere, and sufficiently decided to act upon.

4. By and by, in came Lord Palmerston: we conversed a full hour on the subject of the Slave Trade, and I can assure you, a more ingenuous appearance I never saw. The young man's conscience seemed hard at work for fear, not of saying too little, but of saying too much, viz. of saying more than he could justify to his mind, from the little consideration which he had given to the subject. He is but a lad;—but I could not discover the most latent hostility, or ground for suspecting hostility, and he must be a deceiver, indeed, of a very deep cast, if he deceives at all in this instance. In a word, all things considered and weighed over and over, and not brought to a crisis till between nine and ten this morning, I declared for him. About an hour after this, came Christian, who said he had just met Lord Clive, who had told him that my declaration had got Lord Palmerston thirty-four votes already. *That*, no doubt, is sadly overstated; and be it as it may, we are all in a woful minority. But as minorities usually support themselves, and keep themselves in heart by dwelling on their virtuous and disinterested motives, and by getting a little together, and talking against the motives of the majorities, so do we.

5. I fervently wish you may find Lord H. P., and Fox, &c., as true friends to the Abolition as you have reason to suppose them. Their having been so long pledged (at least Fox) may do something; inclination may also do something; but where there is a want of sound and substantial principle, men will act right no longer than they conceive it suits their interests on the whole. You will have Socinians everywhere in the Church, if not Deists; and in the State you will have the same, with an inundation of low profligate morals.

Things were bad enough before, but the bowl will, I think, roll faster down the hill.

6. You will have judged before this, whether my letter to you of yesterday ought to be sent to Lord H. Petty, or not—with a view to do you any good in his mind. As to myself, I care not a halfpenny; but it may be of great use to the cause of the Abolition to keep well with him; and I should hope that the things I said about you in that letter would be conducive to that purpose really; for, in fact, you have been very useful to him, and he must know it, cannot but know it: if I had been the only person concerned, he might have suspected some sort of collusion, perhaps.

7. Smith, the fellow-commoner, is astonished to find they are drinking Fox every day in Trinity College Combination Room, and a fortnight ago they were drinking Pitt.

Yours ever,

ISAAC MILNER.

P. S. Did I tell you, they say Lord H. Petty must have gained you by praying extempore?

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO REV. THOMAS GISBORNE.

Broomfield, February 11, 1806.

My dear Gisborne,

Had I foreseen that my not writing to you immediately on my receipt of your slip of paper would lead to so long a silence as has actually followed, I would have broken through every impediment, and have sent you at least a few lines; and as it often happens, waiting has had the effect of giving me more to say, while I have no more time to say it in. O what a lesson does Pitt's latter end read to us, of the importance of attending to religion in the days of health and vigour, and even of the benefits which may follow from being acquainted with the language of Scripture, and with the principles of Christianity! Poor fellow! for some time, perhaps a

fortnight or more before his death, he sat chiefly (till the last few days, when he was almost entirely in bed) in his chair, neither reading, nor talking, nor hearing conversation. Conversation in a few moments fatigued him, and he saw but few people from the time of his coming from Bath, about eighteen days or twelve (on the sudden, I forget which) before his decease, and none at all but the Bishop, the physicians, and his servants, and one or two of the young Stanhopes, for the last week. It was not till the morning before his death that the Bishop of Lincoln could get leave to speak to him as to a dying man, and I have no reason to believe he thought himself in any immediate danger before. The Bishop proposed to pray with him, and in the strictest confidence, I will tell you what I am bound by promise not to mention generally. Pitt at first, poor fellow, objected—that he was not worthy to offer up any prayer (I think it was added) in his present state, referring, I suppose, to his bodily and mental weakness. The Bishop very properly told him that he, Pitt, knew the Bishop would not deceive him, and assured him that was the very state of mind in which prayer was best and most properly offered. The Bishop then prayed with him, and afterwards Pitt desired to settle his temporal concerns, showing very much his character, such as I conceived it, by one or two traits which I will mention some other time. I am extremely pressed to-day. I am not aware, but have reason to fear the contrary, no farther religious intercourse took place before or after, and I own I thought what was inserted in the papers impossible to be true. Pitt was a man who always said less than he thought on such topics. The Bishop I ought to mention told me, he had often wished to speak to him before on these subjects, but the physicians said, “No, it might be fatal to him,” &c. O my dear friend, what a scene does the dying chamber of this great man exhibit! Just before, we received the account of the death of Mrs. Buchanan, who was perfectly aware of her situation, and appeared to have almost a foretaste of the joy of heaven, and a countenance expressive of

her heavenly hope, Christian love, and confidence. But what has struck me most is, that perhaps poor Pitt may be truly said to have died of a broken heart—he, who was prime minister of England, &c. Lord C. died, I fear, without the smallest thought of God, &c. How awful! yet to the very last he indicated that astonishing zeal in his country's service which his whole life had displayed.

Now one word on a very important topic. Have you been struck by the circumstance of the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, Lord Ellenborough, being for the first time made a politician? It seems a matter of immense importance; considered in all its relations, which I need not specify to you, who are well acquainted with them all. I feel so strongly the evils that it may produce, that I have been considering whether, if no one else did, I ought not to bring it before Parliament. Can a guardian, *ex officio*, of the constitution, be warranted in suffering such an injury as this to be sustained, without trying to prevent it, or giving the alarm? Personally, except that I cannot help fearing him for the Abolition, I should be glad to have Lord Ellenborough in the cabinet, and this brings me lastly to the Abolition.

From various circumstances it has happened that our great cause has been considerably accredited by what has passed at the last election for Cambridge. Lord H. Petty got a great deal of support, owing to his known zeal in the cause. His opponent, Lord Palmerston, lost much, owing to his being supposed, mistakenly I believe, to be our enemy; and numbers declared they would not, though satisfied on all other points, vote for an anti-abolitionist. So far well. The Chancellor of the Exchequer comes from Cambridge in a good state of mind, *quoad hoc*; Fox a decided friend; Grenville ditto; Lord Spencer, I believe, favourable, but not very strong; Lord Moira, I doubt; Sidmouth, Ellenborough; Erskine talking friendly to me, but always absenting himself; Lord Fitzwilliam, I am not quite sure, but I think favourable; Windham contra; but the great point would



be, to get, if possible, the royal family to give up their opposition. ——— had a plan in his head (this strictly *entre nous*,) suggested by his warm zeal, that we should send a deputation to the new ministry to make a sort of compact that we would befriend them as we did Pitt, give them the turn of the scale, &c. if they would promise us to support the Abolition as a government measure. The idea is inadmissible for many reasons. The two parties would infallibly have different ideas of the practical extent of the obligation, and mutual misunderstanding, crimination, and recrimination would infallibly ensue. I have scarcely a moment in which to say that poor Lord Melville has, as I believe, a dangerous distemper, but one under which he may live twenty years, or may be carried off suddenly. I must break off. Kind remembrances.

Ever yours,

W. WILBERFORCE.

P. S. I broke off so hastily at last as to leave out my conclusion. Though any such express contract as that which our friend suggested would be inadmissible, both on grounds of rectitude and policy, yet I think we may and ought to contrive that the effect intended by it may be produced; and though I dare scarcely be sanguine, when I recollect with whom we have to do, yet I cannot but entertain some hopes, that the wish to mollify and even conciliate and gain over a number of strange, impracticable, and otherwise *uncomeatable* fellows, by gratifying them in this particular, may have its weight—at least, it will tend to counteract the fear of offending the West Indians, and I trust we shall carry some subordinate measures which government of itself might prescribe.

W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ. TO LORD MUNCASTER.

Broomfield, February 19, 1806.

My dear Muncaster,

Why, you are indeed a wanderer.—Do you

intend to publish your tour? It will be a sentimental one, whenever it is written. I suppose you are showing your young ladies the world; and Bath is certainly a place which ought not to be left unseen by any one who would know the beauties of England. Now you are got so far westward, I think you will get to Plymouth, which is certainly the finest of all our British Lions—never shall I forget the impression it made on me. While I have been writing, another lion has entered—the Dean of Carlisle, who is just arrived from Cambridge on University business, in which Oxford also is concerned. He amuses me with his account of the Oxford doctors.

I have been trying to resume the pen ever since he came in, but in vain, so long as we were *tête-à-tête*; at length a second friend has entered, and by dint of setting them to discuss with each other, I may get on for a little. I am anxious that you should not quit Bath without receiving a few lines from me. By the way, my friend Creyke is at Bath with his daughters. He is a man of spirit, of principle, and of intelligence; one of those characters which are scarcely to be found in any other country than England. A justice; a commissioner of taxes; an officer in the militia; in short, a man who, for between thirty and forty years, has been gratuitously devoting his time and his talents to the service of his country. I know not whether you observed last year a proposal to pay a chairman of the Quarter Sessions for the district of Salford; I seldom have been more jealous of any new principle, and was with difficulty prevailed on to consent to it, in that one instance, on account of the special circumstances of the case.

All this, by the by.—Now let me tell you a report I lately heard, which you have heard too, if your means of information become greater at all in proportion as you come nearer to the great centre of matter and motion—it is, that Fox took an opportunity, lately, of explaining a little with the King, assuring him, that though he had felt it his duty to oppose his Majesty's

ministers, he had never lost his attachment to his Majesty personally, and to the house of Hanover in general; and I am assured he added, that he should be careful not to give his Majesty pain by pressing him, while he should be in office, on any topics, the bringing forward of which might distress him. If this were so, and I heard it (though I wish it to be mentioned very reservedly) from pretty good authority, he must have alluded to the Irish Catholic question. But Fox has not lost his imprudence, as he proved by what he said both on the Union, and on the King's friends. Our departed friend's funeral is likely to be most respectably attended. I am glad of this, as you will be. Indeed, I wish you had been here, that you might have testified this last mark of your respect. I must break off. Kind remembrances to Lady Muncaster and your daughters, to whom Mrs. W. joins me in kind remembrances.

Ever yours affectionately,

W. WILBERFORCE.

HENRY BROUGHAM, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE. ESQ.

Temple, Wednesday evening.

My dear Sir,

I received your letter this morning, and afterwards dined in the house alluded to in my last.

I had written to Lord H. Petty very fully upon the subject of the Spanish Slave Trade, and I am happy to find, by a conversation with him this afternoon, that he is perfectly master of the subject which I had attempted to press upon his attention. He and I talked over a good part of it in presence of Mr. Fox, which I thought the best way of letting him take a share in the discussion or not, as he might choose. For I considered that this subject is more delicate, and involves a variety of nicer relations than our general question of abolition. Whether Mr. Fox listened much to us or not, I can't say; but he did not join. On the Slave

Trade, in general, we talked a great deal—and you may believe all agreed. Lord H. Petty mentioned that you had a wish to begin the campaign, by trying how far a compromise could be effected with the Lords. Mr. Fox was greatly interested by this topic; but neither Petty nor myself could point out any specific mode of making the attempt. Petty seemed only to think that you meant such a compromise as might comprehend those peers who had committed themselves against the grand measure. I should add that the company present were Mr. Fox, Lord Holland, Lord H. Petty, and myself. As this was the first time of my being in Mr. Fox's house, I could not take the liberty of starting matters in conversation, and a great many of the topics of the day naturally interfering, the Slave Trade was dropt.

I, however, contrived to say all I could think to Lord H. Petty, and explained the views respecting the probable influence of a vigorous support of our great cause, in favour of the Ministry at an election. To this he listened very attentively, and I shall again renew it. I have to add, that Lord H. Petty considers the matter in question as intended to be speedily communicated through him to his colleagues in the government. When I say that he carefully perused eight pages of a letter, and fourteen of an appendix upon the subject, during the hurry of his budget season, you will perceive how much he desires to be master of it. It is unnecessary to add that, in his situation, he could not give any decision; but what I could collect was highly favourable. My opinion is, from all I see, that it cannot, or at least will not, be taken separately from the general American question. Should you think my interference in its behalf with the new envoy, Lord Selkirk, likely to have a good tendency? I know him very well, and see him constantly. I shall endeavour to call in Palace Yard to-morrow, but write this in case I should be prevented. Of course you will take no notice of its contents.

HENRY BROUGHAM.



HENRY BROUGHAM, ESQ. TO WM. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

1, Tanfield Court, Temple, 1806.

My dear Sir,

I called to-day to inform you, that I had lost no time in talking with Lord Holland upon the subject of our last conversation. Feeling as warmly as he does, upon every thing relating to the Abolition, it was natural that this communication should interest him greatly. He accordingly promised immediately to enter fully into the subject with Mr. Fox the very first opportunity. He perfectly agrees with you on the importance of conciliating, by all means, so weighty a personage as the one we alluded to—but doubts how far it may be possible. As for Mr. Fox's zeal, there can be no question about that—but some of those whom we had counted upon are scarcely sure cards. Among others, I am sorry to learn that Lord —— is an extremely lukewarm abolitionist. Lord Holland, accordingly, has spoken to his uncle, and means to do it more fully and formally the very first opportunity. Hitherto he has not received any definite answer upon the matter in question; and he seemed to doubt how far Mr. Fox would be inclined to pledge himself to exert himself in the manner pointed out. As soon as I hear further from Lord Holland I shall not fail to let you know.

In the mean time, does any thing more occur to you as possible to be done either publicly or privately for this cause?

I remain ever yours, &c.

H. BROUGHAM.

JOHN JAY, ESQ. TO W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Bedford, Westchester County, State of New York, }  
14th April, 1806. }

Dear Sir,

It was not until within a week that I received your friendly letter of the 7th November last. It ex-

presses sentiments of esteem and regard which, being mutual, excite agreeable recollections and emotions.

"War in Disguise," of which you was so good as to enclose a copy, has given occasion to uneasiness relative to the matter and design of it. It contains marks of ability, but the author has not been entirely circumspect. I enclose an answer to it, written, as it is supposed, and as I believe, by a gentleman of excellent talents and good dispositions.\*

It appears to me, that every *independent* state has, as such, a perfect right at all times, whether at war or at peace, to make grants to and treaties with any other independent state; but then those acts, in order to be valid, must consist with justice, and be in no respect fraudulent. To the validity of such grants and treaties, no third power, whether belligerent or neutral, can, in my opinion, have reasonable cause to object.

When such acts are fraudulent, and injurious to others, those others are justifiable in regarding them as being what they are (that is, fraudulent,) and in acting accordingly. When such acts are just and fair, but abused to the injury of others, those others have a right to complain of and to attack the *abuse*, but not the thing abused.

Whether this or that particular act (of the description alluded to) be fair or fraudulent, is a question to be decided by evidence internal and external, according to the rules and maxims of the laws of nations relative to such cases.

Believing these principles to be well founded, they do not permit me to adopt some of the opinions of this ingenious writer, nor to approve of all the latitude contended for by some of his opponents. To view in their various lights and relations, and to examine properly all the doctrines and positions in question, cannot be done within the compass of a letter.

Your disposition and desire to promote good-will between our two countries exactly accord with my own. It is to be wished that each of them may ever be mind-

\* Gouverneur Morris.

ful, that the preservation of friendship between nations, as between individuals, requires justice and prudence always, and even forbearance sometimes; for states, as well as persons, commit errors. It is our lot to live in perplexing and eventful times. The passions of men are not good counsellors, and never less so than when agitated or inflamed.

We have seen concluded, with the treaty of Amiens, the *first* act of the astonishing tragedy which the French revolution has introduced on the theatre of the world. The present and succeeding acts will probably be highly interesting and impressive. In this prodigious drama, Great Britain still sustains a conspicuous and important part: perhaps she may be employed to restrain the "remainder of wrath." Whether this distant nation is to appear among the *dramatis personæ*, cannot now be known. We certainly do not desire it.

The inconveniences apprehended from the death of Mr. Pitt will doubtless be diminished, if not obviated, by the general confidence reposed in your new administration. I am glad to find that Lord Grenville holds a distinguished place in it. My respect and esteem for him continue undiminished.

Very sincerely do I congratulate you on your domestic felicity. May it continue and increase. I thank you for what you have briefly remarked on that topic; for you have given me pleasure, by letting me see how much reason you have to be pleased.

With true esteem and regard, I am, dear sir,  
Your faithful and obedient servant,

JOHN JAY.





